

DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

India now free of Naxalism: Shah

Blames Cong for long spell of Left wing violence

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Trump threatens to destroy Iran's energy resources

Seeks quicker deal, suggests seizing oil hub of Kharg Island

DUBAI, AP

US President Donald Trump on Monday threatened widespread destruction of Iran's energy resources and other vital infrastructure, including desalination plants, if a deal to end the war is not reached "shortly".

Tehran meanwhile struck a key water and electrical plant in Kuwait, and an oil refinery in Israel came under attack. Israel and the US launched a new wave of strikes on Iran, as the war raged with no end in sight.

Trump's new threat in a social media post and earlier comments in an interview with the *Financial Times* that suggested US troops could seize Iran's Kharg Island oil export hub highlighted a frequent tactic. He has repeatedly claimed to be making diplomatic progress — though Tehran denies negotiating directly — while ramping up his threats.

It remains unclear where the diplomatic effort facilitated by Pakistan stands. Iran's continuing attacks on its Gulf neighbours could further complicate any talks. The UAE has been hard hit, and is signalling it wants Iran disarmed in any ceasefire.

In a social media post, Trump said "great progress is being made" in talks with Iran to end military operations. But

WAR IN WEST ASIA

● Israel's military says it struck the Imam Hossein University in Tehran run by Revolutionary Guards

● Israeli airstrike kills at least three Hezbollah members

● Israeli soldier killed in southern Lebanon

Large blaze at Haifa oil refinery in Israel after it was hit by missile debris.

Reuters

● Rockets target Iraqi military base inside Baghdad airport complex, which also houses a support centre for US embassy

● 2 Indonesian UN peacekeepers killed, 2 others wounded by projectile in Lebanon

● Spain's left-wing govt closes Spanish airspace to US planes carrying out missions against Iran

● Airstrike damages a Mahan Air aircraft in Iran, affecting a mission to India to collect aid

● Iran confirms Revolutionary Guards commander Alireza Tangsiri's death

Indian killed in Kuwait

An Indian national has been killed in Kuwait in Iranian strikes on a power and water desalination plant, taking the total number of Indian fatalities from the ongoing conflict in West Asia to eight since it began a month back.

Details on Page 13

Iran deliberates on NPT exit

Iran's parliament is reviewing a possible exit from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the country's foreign ministry said, while insisting Tehran hasn't and won't seek nuclear weapons. It added that Tehran would respect the treaty as long as it is a member.

he bristled that if a deal is not reached "shortly", and if the Strait of Hormuz is not immediately reopened, the US would broaden its offensive by "com-

pletely obliterating" power plants, oil wells, Kharg Island and possibly even desalination plants.

► **Iran, Page 7**

Navy staffer kills woman, stuffs body in fridge

HYDERABAD, DHNS: In a shocking incident, a civilian employee of the Indian Navy killed a woman, cut her body into pieces and stored it in a refrigerator in Andhra Pradesh's Visakhapatnam. He later surrendered.

According to police sources, Chintada Ravindra's (35) wife had left for her parents' home a month ago for childbirth. On Sunday, Ravindra invited the victim, whom he met on a dating app, to his house. After an argument, he killed her. He claimed that the woman was harassing him for money.

When the police brought him to the apartment for scene reconstruction, the victim's relatives attempted to attack him.

Details on Page 12

Social media news creators to come under I&B ministry ambit

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Social media content creators, including YouTubers and influencers, who post news-related content online, could soon face the same government oversight as professional news publishers as the Centre has proposed tweaks to the Information Technology rules.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on Monday issued the draft Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Second Amendment Rules, 2026, seeking stakeholders' views by April 14.

The proposal seeks to bring news and current affairs con-



tent posted by private individuals — including YouTubers, Instagram Reels creators, X (Twitter) users, and other influencers with significant followings — under Part III of the rules.

Part III currently governs digital media ethics and enforces a three-tier content oversight mechanism, which previously applied only to professional media organisations such as publishers, online news portals and news aggregators.

The existing rules explicitly excluded "any individual or user who is not transmitting content in the course of systematic business, professional or commercial activity".

► **Social Media, Page 7**

Plan to raise Chinnaswamy Stadium capacity: DKS

BENGALURU, DHNS

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, on Monday, stated that the government is considering proposals to increase the seating capacity of the M Chinnaswamy Stadium. "If we can increase the capacity by 20,000, it would be good," he said.

Shivakumar said that the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) had called for an Expression of Interest (EOI) for the enhancement of seats and the government will take a call on approving them once the final proposals are submitted.

"Tamil Nadu and many other states have done this. We can increase the number of seats by taking up work in phases. We have asked the KSCA to



present the proposals. The government will study them and approve," he said.

That apart, the government is also identifying land to build a new stadium and inspections were held at a couple of locations, he said.

KSCA spokesperson Vinay Mruthunjaya, who was part of the meeting, confirmed to *DH* that the association

was looking towards increasing the stadium capacity.

"Very soon, the KSCA will place advertisements seeking the expression of interest from experts in architecture on how to increase the capacity of the Chinnaswamy Stadium. This is exactly what our president, Venkatesh Prasad, told the deputy chief minister. Since this is an old stadium, many factors are at play, and it needs a detailed study."

On building a new stadium, Mruthunjaya said, "Deputy Chief Minister said the government is willing to allocate land on the outskirts of the city for expanding our cricketing infrastructure. This is apart from our idea about increasing the Chinnaswamy capacity. KSCA is also looking at it."

► **Chinnasawamy, Page 7**

B'luru Biz Corridor project takes off with Ph-1 tender

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

In a major milestone for the long-awaited Bengaluru Business Corridor, the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has invited global tenders for a 19.80 km project connecting Tumakuru Road and Ballari Road on the city's outskirts. This is the first phase of the 74-km project which has been split into three packages based on land acquisition progress.

According to the documents, the first phase — estimated to cost Rs 3,348 crore — comprises three major interchanges (clover-leaf) at Madavara (NICE Road integration), Doddaballapur junction and Ballari Road (near Collins Aerospace). A grade separator at Hesara-ghatta junction, five km of flyovers and major bridges, three railway overbridges across Tumakuru, Doddaballapur and Chikkaballapur lines and dedicated crossings over forest (1.24 km) and lake (0.42 km) are part of the plan.

The project will adopt the design, build, operate and transfer model, with a 36-month construction timeline and 10 years of operation and maintenance.

In the second phase, BDA plans to take up the Ballari

What is B'luru Biz Corridor?

The name Bengaluru Business Corridor coined by Deputy CM DK Shivakumar by re-branding the peripheral ring road (PRR). The 74-km project covers Hosur Road and Tumakuru Road in the West, which encircle the city's outskirts by linking NICE Road. The project is expected to ease traffic congestion besides boosting real estate.

Road-Old Madras Road stretch via Hennur Road. The third phase will cover the stretch up to Hosur Road.

BDA has provided for integrating the metro along the corridor. The 65-metre wide stretch will have 12 lanes. Of these, eight lanes will be part of the main carriageway and four lanes as service roads.

About six toll plazas are planned. "We have more or less acquired 83% of land for the first phase," L K Atheeq, chairperson of Bengaluru Business Corridor Ltd told *DH*, adding the project has undergone changes including integration with NICE Road at Madavara.

Census 2027 exercise to start in Karnataka from tomorrow

33 questions notified for first phase of enumeration

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Census 2027 will commence in Karnataka with self enumeration on April 1 followed by a month-long house-to-house 'Houselisting and Housing Census' starting on April 16.

The 'Houselisting and Housing Census' is the first phase of Census and will be conducted across India between April 1 and September 30 this year during which details related to housing conditions will be collected.

This will be followed by the second phase in February next year when population is counted and details of caste,

Census operations

FIRST PHASE

● Self enumeration starts from April 1 to April 15

● 'Houselisting and Housing Census' between April 16 and May 16

● During Housing Census, details related to housing conditions, assets and amenities of households will be collected

● Along with Karnataka, seven other states and Union Territories will start the process on April 1

SECOND PHASE

● Starts February next year

● Caste, socio-economic, demographic, cultural details of each household will be collected

“The individual data collected cannot be shared under the RTI Act, used as evidence in a court or shared with any organisation.

Mritunjay Kumar Narayan, Census Commissioner

demographic, socio-economic, cultural and other details of every member in each household are collected.

Along with Karnataka, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Goa, Sikkim, Odisha, Lakshadweep, Mizoram and Delhi (NDMC and Delhi Cantt) will start the process on April 1.

► **Census, Page 7**

Rapido bike rider held on molestation charge

BENGALURU, DHNS: A Rapido bike rider has been arrested for allegedly molesting a woman passenger who had hailed a ride from BTM Layout to Indiranagar.

The incident was reported around 8 pm on March 26, according to the police.

According to the FIR, the suspect, Mohammed Khaja (21), a resident of Devarjewanahalli, allegedly behaved inappropriately and repeatedly touched the complainant (25), though she resisted his advances. The suspect even asked the passenger to allow him to touch her inappropriately, the complaint stated.

Details on Page 3

OUR CENSUS

OUR DEVELOPMENT

(First Phase of Census - 2027)

House listing and Housing Census by the Government of India is about to begin in your State/Union Territory. Before this, a 15-day special facility is being provided where you can fill in your information online yourself.

SELF-ENUMERATION (SE)

SE Period in the State of Karnataka is from

1st April 2026 to 15th April 2026

Simple, Secure and Digital Process

How to do Self-Enumeration ?

● Visit the official portal: se.census.gov.in

● You will receive an SE ID after submission

● Log in via OTP using your mobile number

● Keep your SE ID safe

● Select your State, District and locality details

● Provide the SE ID to the Enumerator when they visit

● Mark your house location on the Digital Map

● The Enumerator will verify the information

● Fill in information related to the house and family

Its Benefits

Saves time

Accurate information

Faster data processing

Remember: Self-Enumeration is a special facility

If you are unable to self-enumerate, do not worry; an enumerator will definitely visit your home during the scheduled period to record the information

All your information will remain completely confidential and secure

I am

I am

PARTICIPATE IN THE CENSUS

Say with pride - My count is the strength of the country

Let's fulfill our responsibility and participate in the Census

@CensusIndia2027

Victoria Hospital trauma centre under scanner after Lokayukta probe

Expired drugs, idle ICU beds, ambulance touting exposed

BENGALURU, DHNS



The committee constituted by the Karnataka Lokayukta to probe alleged irregularities at Victoria Hospital.

The use of expired drugs, ICU beds lying unused due to faulty ventilators, and touting by private ambulance operators are rampant at the Trauma and Emergency Care Centre (TECC), part of the state-run Victoria Hospital, according to findings from a suo motu inquiry conducted by the Lokayukta following complaints from patients.

The Lokayukta constituted a committee led by its Additional Registrar of Enquiries-5, a sitting district judge, along with the Superintendent of Police, City Division-1, and other police officers to carry out a surprise inspection and submit a report.

The inspection revealed that despite six ICU beds being vacant, an emergency patient was denied admission due to the unavailability of functional beds.

It also found merit in complaints regarding private ambulances operating from the Victoria Hospital premises. Middlemen and private ambulance drivers were reportedly contacting hospital doctors and urging them to refer patients to their services for transfer to private hospitals.

In some cases, hospital staff

allegedly insisted that patients' attendants opt for private ambulances for further treatment, citing inadequate facilities at the hospital.

On February 6, the Lokayukta summoned senior officials of Victoria Hospital and sought an explanation.

In her response, Dr Asima Banu, in charge of TECC, stated that the emergency patient was denied admission because the six vacant beds lacked ventilator connections.

She acknowledged the issues caused by private am-

balance operators and middlemen, describing them as "uncontrollable".

She also highlighted the hospital's shortage of beds and incidents of assault on doctors and other staff.

In his submission, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Lokesh B Jagalasar assured that 12 additional police personnel would be deployed on the Victoria Hospital campus, along with regular inspections to identify and curb miscreants.

The Lokayukta observed that keeping six ICU beds unused in such a critical trauma centre amounts to negligence.

The report, which also flagged expired drugs and other deficiencies, has been forwarded to the Chief Secretary, the Additional Chief Secretary of the Medical Education Department, and the Director of Medical Education.

The Lokayukta has sought a compliance report by April 23. The next hearing is scheduled for April 27.

Senior citizens push back on Whitefield commercial activity

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

Residents of a gated community in Whitefield have protested against the rise of commercial establishments within their layout.

Prestige Whistling Palms, on ECC Road in Pattandur Agrahara, moved court in 2025 against a commercial complex in the layout. Since then, more such buildings have come up or are under construction, residents said.

"This is a complete residential area. We bought our plots from Prestige and later formed our own association in 2014," said Anselma Elizabeth Vas, a senior citizen residing in the layout.

"When the layout was registered as an association in 2014, we also created a set of bylaws for what is allowed and not inside the layout. These bylaws clearly do not allow the establishment of any commercial building," she added.

The layout has 60 plots, of which about 50 are occupied. The issue began with plot



This commercial space is rising fast inside the layout.

No 2, initially sanctioned for a multistorey residential building, being converted into a commercial complex.

"The owner of the plot even broke down the compound wall of the layout, which is not allowed," said Anselma said. "When we realised that the owner was building a commercial establishment, we went to the BBMP for help, but it was of no use."

"So we went to court, and the court ordered the BBMP to demolish the building," she further added, noting that the order was passed in July 2025, despite which the building is still standing.

Residents said the complex

houses a parlour, a dental clinic, and a spa. The owner is also constructing a PG.

"This has also encouraged more people to flout both the layout and GBA rules and build commercial buildings and break compound walls," said a resident.

"When we recently approached the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), we were told that since hostels and PGs are residential buildings, they are allowed within the layout."

"GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao said he would look into the matter, but there has been no response so far. Residents who went to court have also begun receiving counter notices from the GBA," the resident added.

"The layout has many senior citizens and single women, and with multiple commercial buildings under construction, there are many labourers present," another resident said on condition of anonymity.

"There is dust and smoke due to large-scale construction. As a small association, we have only one security guard."

Biker dies in collision with moving lorry

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 24-year-old biker was killed in a collision with a lorry near Prolife Hospital in Byatarayanapura early Monday morning. The victim, Anil Gowda, a resident of Rajaghat in Doddaballapur, worked as a clerk at the APMC (RMC Yard) in the city.

Police said the accident occurred around 6.10 am while Gowda was on his way to work. He reportedly lost control of his motorcycle and crashed into the rear of an Eicher lorry. The lorry, travelling in the middle lane, is said to have suddenly moved to the left.

Gowda sustained severe head injuries in the impact. He was rushed to a nearby hospital by passersby, but died shortly after admission. Hebbal traffic police have registered a negligence case against the driver, Raviullah Kaviraj.

Invites to be published should be sent to:
incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.
Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Thiruvananthapuram Division
Tender Notice No. & Date: GEM/2026/B/7373572
Dated: 23.03.2026

The Divisional Railway Manager / (Mechanical) / Southern Railway / Thiruvananthapuram - 14 for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender for the under mentioned work. For other details the tenderers are advised to refer the detailed tender on the below mentioned web-site.

S. No	Details	Description
1	Tender Notice No. & Date	GEM/2026/B/7373572 Dated: 23.03.2026
2	Name of work	Comprehensive linen management in nominated running trains based at Thiruvananthapuram depot of Thiruvananthapuram Division, Southern Railway for a period of four years
3	Advertised value	₹ 69,66,62,022.93
4	Period of Contract	48 months
5	EMD	₹ 36,33,320
6	Tender closing date & time	13.04.2026 at 11:30 Hrs
7	Website particulars	https://www.gem.gov.in

The firms registered in GeM portal are only eligible to participate in this tender. For details of bid submission - scope of work, approximate value of tender, location and other documents, please refer website portal "https://www.gem.gov.in"

It is the responsibility of the tenderers to check any corrigendum issued for any correction, deletion or modifications uploaded subsequently in the website and the same shall be taken into account while uploading the tender. For further details please visit website at "https://www.gem.gov.in"

Divisional Railway Manager / (Mechanical) / Thiruvananthapuram

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

MATERIAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(e) Tender Notice for the Supply of Stores, No. EPS/130/2025)

PCMM/WCR on behalf of the President of India, invites the following advertised tenders through E-procurement System. No manual/postal offers shall be entertained. Tenderers can be accessed under the link website https://ireps.gov.in for details and for submission of Tender.

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Short Description	Tendered Qty.
1	40262808	Blind socket assembly with locking arrangement	192 Nos.
2	40262785	Low maintenance Lead Acid Battery 290 AH, 24V	68 Sets
3	40252014A	Sealed Maintenance Free Battery 12V, 42 AH	1413 Nos.
4	38254155 C	POLY RING	55153 Nos.
5	50265131 RC	Supply of 5 watt VHF Digital Walkie Talkie Set without Keypad and without Display	2983 Sets
6	80261056	SHELL GADUS S5 V 42 P 2.5 grease for WAG-9/WAP7	9112 Kg.
7	65255010	Design, manufacture, supply, installation, testing, commissioning and proving of Broad Gauge CNC Surface Wheel Lathe as per Specification and documents attached	01 No.
		Cost of comprehensive AMC for five years after the warranty as per clause 17.	01 No.
		Cost of the concomitant accessories according to tender specifications	01 No.
		Cost of Turnkey Charges viz. foundation, installation & commissioning etc.	01 No.
		Cost of Preventive Maintenance during 1st & 2nd year of Warranty Period	01 No.
		Cost of concomitant works according to tender specification.	01 No.

DUE DATE:- For Sr.No. 1: 24.04.2026, For Sr.Nos. 2 & 3: 27.04.2026, For Sr.No. 4: 28.04.2026, For Sr.No. 5: 30.04.2026, For Sr.No. 6: 13.05.2026 and For Sr.No. 7: 14.05.2026.

For tenders with estimated value below ₹ 50 lakhs, interested firms are advised to visit www.ireps.gov.in

For Principal Chief Material Manager, West Central Railway, Jabalpur.

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान - एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER NOTICE NO. 06/SBC/26 of 24-03-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Sl.	Description of work	Approx Value
1	Sub Work - I: Assistant Divisional Engineer/Hindupur Section : Proposed construction of Snt buildings (Relay room and Telecom room) at Basampalli (BSPL), including electrical portion in connection with the work of provision of additional loop line. Sub Work -II: Assistant Divisional Engineer/Hindupur Section : BSPL : Proposed civil works for raising and extension of PF-1 and PF-2, construction of PF walls, providing bore well and water supply arrangements in lieu of providing extra loop line Rd-3, including electrical portions. Sub Work -III: Proposed extension of existing Bridge No. 109 at km 37/900 - 38/000, PD-110 at km 38/100-200, PD-111 at km 38/800-900, PD-112 at km 38/930 in Basampalle yard (BSPL) in connection with the proposed additional loop line. (Composite tender) Maintenance period is 36 months for SW-I and 12 months for SW-II, III.	Rs. 6,17,86,972/-
2	Penukonda-Sri Satya Sai Prashanthi Nilayam Rs. 2,53,12,145/- Construction section : Proposed Foot Over Bridge (FOB) to connect PF - 1 to PF - 2 at Basampalli (BSPL) station at km 38/275 in Assistant Divisional Engineer/Hindupur section. Maintenance period is 12 months	
3	Assistant Divisional Engineer/Hindupur Section : DBU Rs. 1,52,79,480/- Civil works for extension of track from Tower wagon siding to trap switch at shunting neck and Snt building at Doddaballapur (DBU) yard in connection with the work of Doddaballapur - Provision of emergency dispatch crossover at Yelahanka end. Maintenance period is 12 months	
4	Sub Work - I: Penukonda - Sri Satya Sai Prashanthi Nilayam - Dharmavaram Rs. 2,26,62,522/- Track work, Earthwork and supply of Ballast in connection with the work of Provision of Additional loop line Road - 3 at Basampalli (BSPL) station. Sub Work - II: Doddaballapur Track work, Earthwork and supply of Ballast in connection with the work of Provision of emergency dispatch cross over at Yelahanka end for providing universal RnD facility to all running lines and connectivity from tower car shed to existing shunting neck including extension of existing neck from 440 to 600m. (Composite work)	

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 20-04-2026**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Engineer /Co-Ordination Bengaluru

PUB/1028/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the RailOne app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through RailOne app, and enjoy up to a 3% discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRR | SWRAIWAYHQ | @sw_railways

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTION OF SINDHI LANGUAGE

(An Autonomous Organization under Ministry of Education)

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Advertisement Notice No. 02/2025

NCPSL-SCHEMES

The Council invites proposals on prescribed format available at <https://www.facebook.com/ncpsl> www.facebook.com/NCPSL. and www.ncpsl.gov.in under the following schemes for the financial year 2026-27.

- Bulk Purchase of Sindhi Books /Magazines**
 - Books published from 01-01-2023 to 31-12-2025 will only be considered.
 - Magazines published after issue of date of advertisement will be considered.

NOTE: (i) If the book is selected by the council under the bulk purchase scheme, in that condition, applicant must submit soft copy (Computer Ready Copy) of the selected book with NOC for uploading on Council website through email ncpsl.bulk2023@gmail.com or in pen drive.
(ii) 20% of additional grant of approved amount will be paid to the applicant who submit his/her book(s) in both scripts of Sindhi Language (Persio Arabic and Devnagari).
(iii) Maximum of 02 titles of any individual should be purchased whether it is submitted by writer/ editor / translator / publisher
- Financial Assistance for publication of Manuscript/Articles/ Research Papers and video lecture series.**

A) Manuscripts:-

 - Descriptive catalogue of rare manuscripts.
 - Self-instructors for Sindhi Language written in other Indian language.
 - Original writing on linguistic, literary works, fiction, drama, poetry, and Ideological, Social, Anthropological and Cultural themes.
 - Critical edition and/or publication of old manuscripts with or without translations (in other Indian Languages or English).
 - Translations and publications in Sindhi language of books originally published in another Indian or foreign language.
 - Any other kind of publication as may be individually accepted as conducive to the promotion of Sindhi Language..

NOTE:

(i) **50% of additional grant of sanctioned amount will be paid to the applicant who submit his/her manuscript in both scripts of Sindhi Language (Persio Arabic & Devnagari)**

(ii) If the manuscript is selected by the council under the Financial Assistance for publication scheme, in that condition, applicant must submit soft copy (Computer Ready Copy) of the selected manuscripts with NOC for uploading of the book on council website through ncpsl.publication2023@gmail.com.

(iii) At the time of publication books should have ISBN no.

B) Articles are invited in hard copy by post and soft copy(computer Ready Copy) on our email: ncpsl.articles2023@gmail.com

(a) Articles for publication in both scripts of Sindhi language for children's magazine 'Popatra'

(b) Articles for publication in both scripts of Sindhi language for literary magazine 'Mahak'

(c) Articles based on Sindhi art, culture, language and literature, Education etc. in Hindi language for publication in Magazine "Sahitya Sindhu".

(d) Research papers in Hindi and English Language on subject related to Sindhi language, literature and Sindhiyat for publication in Research Journal.

C) Video lecture series :-

The e-content under Bulk Purchase Scheme has been replaced to "video lecture series" under Financial Assistance for publication of Manuscript Scheme from Financial year 2023-24. Those Applicants interested having experience of teaching of Sindhi language from primary school and above may send "video lecture of one hour" on Sindhi language, art, culture, Education and literature etc, restricted to five lectures only on our email: ncpsl.videolecture2023@gmail.com or in pen drive. (Medium of Lecture will be Sindhi language only)

(D) Council invites the application for proposal for publication of **20 Booklets (Bilingual)** of 24 Pages print in respect of those personalities who contributed their life for the promotion of Sindhi Language, Literature, Culture and Sindhiyat.
- Financial Assistance to voluntary organization (FAVO) for selected promotional activities relating to Sindhi Language.**
 - Voluntary organization / Societies/ Charitable Endowments Trust which are registered under the relevant Central or state Act shall be eligible to apply for assistance under the scheme
 - NGO should be registered on Govt portal at www.ngosindia.com otherwise shall not be entertained. NOTE: i) No advance payment will be made for organizing any activity to the organizers. ii) Direct application from any individual candidate will not be considered.
- Sindhi Language Learning Course Scheme(SLLCS)**
 - Educational Institutions/ Social Service organizations/Sindhi Panchayats /State Sindhi Academies and suitable organization recognized by NCPSL for this purpose will be eligible to run Sindhi Language Learning Courses a) Certificate Course (b) Diploma Course (c) Advanced Diploma Course.
 - Interested organizations having registration on NGO portal at www.ngosindia.com are required to register themselves with the NCPSL also by paying **registration fee Rs.1,000/-**. The organizations registered with NCPSL for these courses will ensure the compliance of education qualification of teachers and engagement of supervisors within the Scheme norms.
 - All student those passed 10th and 12th standard with Sindhi subject from NIOS, CBSE and CBSE affiliated school will be given cash prize/ incentive Rs. 1000/- each on receipt the Certificate of passing examination on the prescribed form.

For detailed information visit our website www.ncpsl.gov.in & www.facebook.com/NCPSL, and proforma of various schemes can be downloaded from our website.

Separate application should be submitted for each scheme.

All beneficiaries of above schemes should be linked with AADHAR.

The last date for submission of application/proposal/nomination is **10th May 2026 before 5.30 pm**. After last date no application/proposals/nominations will be entertained. Incomplete and unsigned applications will not be entertained.

All applications/proposals/nominations on prescribed format must be sent by **speed post /Registered post or by hand**.

The applicants may visit NCPSL facebook time to time to know the status of their proposal. All approved proposals will be uploaded on the NCPSL website only after the approval of Executive Board.

Scheme of NCPSL are under revision and amendment to be carried out during current financial year 2026-27. The proposals received under this advertisement will be further restrictive as per the revised/ amended Scheme norms. All rights are reserved with NCPSL-

- To accept or reject of any application/proposal/nomination.
- e-rights of uploading the selected books/Manuscripts/ Articles/Research Papers/Video Lecture of beneficiaries on Council Website.

Director

CBC 21262/12/0008/2526

Government of India
Ministry of Corporate Affairs
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE)
IICA Building, 7th Floor, Plot P-6,7,8, Sector-5, IMT Manesar, Gurgaon, Haryana - 122050. Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

FORM No. STK--6 PUBLIC NOTICE

[Pursuant to sub-section (2) and sub-section (4) of section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 7 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016]

Public Notice:ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/2025-26/2526 Date: 19/03/2026

Reference:

In the matter of striking off or removal of names of (94) companies in the Karnataka state under section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

S.No.	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
1	AC2515689	U85110KA1983PTC005245	RIVER RESORT PRIVATE LIMITED
2	AC2496006	U24119KA1979PTC003478	NANDI CHEMICALS PRIVATE LIMITED
3	AC2524283	U36102KA2002PTC031296	TOUCHSTEEL MODULAR FURNITURE PRIVATE LIMITED
4	AC2418234	U70109KA2023PTC170550	PROPEXY PROPTech PRIVATE LIMITED
5	AC2565094	U72200KA2017PTC107784	ANORIS WELLNESS PRIVATE LIMITED
6	AC2458085	U72900KA2022PTC166744	DZITRA SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
7	AC2597829	U43299KA2024OPC185275	OMLANDS PROJECTS (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
8	AC2591550	U62099KA2024OPC186321	ZENOWAVE AI (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
9	AC2618283	U72900KA2022PTC162198	ODDATEK PRIVATE LIMITED
10	AC2605166	U85110KA1985ULT006836	S.S. TOURIST INDUSTRY PRIVATE LIMITED
11	AC2632227	U80904KA2019PTC124755	KASA INNOVATIVE LEARNING ACADEMY PRIVATE LIMITED
12	AC2622001	U86909KA2023OPC176456	PROPEXY SOUTHLAKS (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
13	AC2659321	U47990KA2024PTC195204	KASHI PACKAGING INDUSTRY PRIVATE LIMITED
14	AC2578181	U74999KA2021PTC155321	AR NADIM PLUMBING PRIVATE LIMITED
15	AC2418503	U72900KA2017PTC100273	3BEES IO PRIVATE LIMITED
16	AC2489828	U05000KA2021PTC154920	CLEARSHRIMP PRIVATE LIMITED
17	AC2491664	U72900KA2020PTC132054	ATINDRIYO TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
18	AC2479497	U92413KA2022PTC162918	GAMING GEEKS MEDIA AND TECH PRIVATE LIMITED
19	AC2515711	U85110KA1992PTC013639	VAISHNAVI COMMUNICATIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
20	AC2296544	U72900KA2019PTC125533	AYU HEALTHCARE PRIVATE LIMITED
21	AC2492527	U74999KA2011PTC056916	ODDROAD HOLIDAYS PRIVATE LIMITED
22	AC2490504	U72900KA2022PTC167767	PIFA TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
23	AC2485929	U74900KA2015PTC080157	IB CONSULTING PRIVATE LIMITED
24	AC2324952	U68100KA2022PTC156673	NIVA LANDMARKS PRIVATE LIMITED
25	AC2320478	U10794KA2026PTC214837	NUTRILACTA LIFE SCIENCES PRIVATE LIMITED
26	AC2530358	U45309KA2022PTC164672	ELBIA DESIGN PRIVATE LIMITED
27	AC2472996	U72200KA2012PTC062425	STRATUMSOF TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
28	AC2296154	U72900KA2021PTC148379	ZIYOU TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
29	AC2330438	U70200KA2024PTC193375	CENSE STRATEGY PRIVATE LIMITED
30	AC2334583	U70200KA2023PTC180539	HIEXM CONSULTANCY PRIVATE LIMITED
31	AC2293044	U70200KA2025OPC197455	HANSIKA SINGH CONSULTANTS (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
32	AC2334241	U74999KA2022PTC165823	ACCESS CERTITUDE PRIVATE LIMITED
33	AC2495360	U02411KA1981PTC004133	NANDI AROMATICS PRIVATE LIMITED
34	AC2497226	U62010KA2024PTC191073	SOLSHPER HORIZONS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
35	AC2500936	U68200KA2023OPC172009	SHOBHESH CONSTRUCTION (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
36	AC2506133	U92490KA2021PTC144302	VRAAN MEDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
37	AC2515594	U85110KA1989PTC009841	NATIONAL DISTILLERIES PRIVATE LIMITED
38	AC2522507	U43299KA2024PTC186901	SUNVA WISHES INFRA PRIVATE LIMITED
39	AC2515653	U85110KA1982PTC004793	SURVA WATCH INDUSTRIES PRIVATE LIMITED
40	AC2370993	U72900KA2021PTC150592	BIKRITECH INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
41	AC2320513	U72200KA2007PTC043983	MANIPAL EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE PRIVATE LIMITED
42	AC2285460	U29256KA2021PTC148834	CRIVENO PRIVATE LIMITED
43	AC2367325	U51909KA2021PTC153112	INDICBAZAAR PRIVATE LIMITED
44	AC2515323	U85110KA1982PTC004794	FOREST RESORT (BANDIPUR) PRIVATE LIMITED
45	AC2399703	U74999KA2022PTC167219	I2B CONSULTANCY SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED
46	AC2375653	U62099KA2023PTC181013	DHRUTI SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
47	AC2417529	U51506KA1994PTC016764	BUOYANT MARKETING PRIVATE LIMITED
48	AC2328820	U72900KA2013PTC070498	SPARDHIN SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
49	AC2376084	U80904KA2016PTC094946	PLUS MYNUS EDUTECH PRIVATE LIMITED
50	AC2515261	U85110KA1985PTC006797	MC DONALD DISTILLERIES PRIVATE LIMITED
51	AC2410621	U74997KA2016PTC092747	VIDHYASANGAM E-LEARNING SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
52	AC2477386	U74999KA2023PTC170206	BRANHAS ACCOUNTING PRIVATE LIMITED
53	AC2532428	U62091KA2025PTC197751	TABPE SYSTEMS PRIVATE LIMITED
54	AC2532261	U72900KA2020OPC139852	MEDHARTI TECH SOLUTIONS (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
55	AC2532014	U35200KA2025PTC085552	NELSA RENEWABLES PRIVATE LIMITED
56	AC2527075	U85120KA2022PTC162614	SAIKAVERI MEDICAL CARE PRIVATE LIMITED
57	AC2523722	U72200KA2015PTC083980	CLARITIZ INNOVATIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
58	AC2530108	U28299KA2026PTC214979	SEYON GOPI GLOBAL ENGINEERING PRIVATE LIMITED
59	AC2525733	U52609KA2018PTC116681	BIOSPICE INDIA ENTERPRISES PRIVATE LIMITED
60	AC2262771	U29304KA2017PTC106542	NYMBLE LABS PRIVATE LIMITED
61	AC2526816	U79110KA2024PTC188308	VIJAYANAGARA HOLIDAYS PRIVATE LIMITED
62	AC2435909	U74999KA2017PTC107780	QUEENS SPORTS PRIVATE LIMITED
63	AC2427247	U72900KA2021PTC149928	BRYT CLUB PRIVATE LIMITED
64	AC2477614	U72900KA2020PTC133316	POLGARTech PRIVATE LIMITED

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL
Bhagwan Mahavir Janma Kalyana Mahotsav: DK Shivakumar, Dinesh Gundu Rao, Byrathi Suresh, KH Muniyappa, D Sudhakar, PC Mohan, Tejaswi Surya; Jain Yuva Sanghataana; Freedom Park; 10.30 am.
Book Release: 'Doordarshi Raja Neta S Nijalingappa', translated into Hindi by Uma Sharma R; Shivaratri Deshikendra Swamiji, Rani Satish; Organised by Teju Prakashan; Shivaratri Rajendra Chintana Mantapa, 8th Block, Jayanagar; 10.30 am.
Art Exhibition: HK Patil, Putanna, Award Presentation: C Somashekar, Award Recipients: CS Krishnashetty, VT Kale, Prabha Mallesh, Mahavir Rayappa Balikai; Karnataka International Artist Village Charitable Trust; Karnataka Chitrakala Parishat, Kumarakrupa Road; 10.30 am.
Presentation of 'Samyama' Award: Siddaramaiah, DK Shivakumar, Rizwan Arshad, HK Patil, Sharanabasappa Darshanapura, Priyank Kharge, NS Bosaraju, Dr Sharanaprakash R Patil, Sharanaprishta; Organised by Karnataka State Beverages Corporation; Mahadev Desai Auditorium, Gandhi Bhavan, Kuma Krupa Road; 11 am onwards.
Inauguration of endowments, Short Poetry Festival: K Mohan-dev Alva, Bairamangala Ramegowda, Poetry Festival Chairman Pattangi S Murali; B M Sri Prathishthan, NR Colony; 4 pm.
CULTURAL
'Roshomon' Play Performance: Directed by Mangala N; Written by Raghuvver Sahe; Organised by Sanchari Theatre; Rangashankara, JP Nagar; 7.30 pm.
RELIGIOUS
Karaga Shaktiyotsava: Mariswamy Math (Kalasipalya) at 12.30 pm; Hasikaraga Pongalu Seva at 3.30 pm; Dharmarayasyam Temple premises, Thigalarpet.
88th Sri Ramanavami Music Festival: Music Concert: Sarvesh D and team; Karnataka Music Centre: Malladi Brothers, MB S. Kannan, Tumkur Ravi Shankar, G Guruprasanna; Sri Rama Seva Mandali Ram Navami Celebration Trust; Kote High School Campus, Chamaraipet; from 5 pm.
33rd Sri Ramanavami Music Festival: Srivani Kala Kendra, Baveshwaranagar; 6.30 pm.
Inauguration: Karnataka Sambraham, Sugama Sangeet, folk songs, drama; Janagere Venkataramaiah; KA Dayananda; Organised by Kuvempu Kalanikethan; Kuvempu Hall, Kannada Sahitya Parishad, Chamaraipet; 5.30 pm.
Muthyalamma Devi Rathotsava: Flower Palakki Festival; Muthyalamma Devi Temple Trust, Muthyalamma K Street, Shivajinagar; 7 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST	
Partly cloudy sky	
TEMPERATURES	
Maximum	34.0°C
Minimum	20.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	NIL
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	39%
Sunset (Mar 31)	6:31 pm
Sunrise (Apr 1)	6:17 am
Moonrise	4:21 pm
Moonset	4:16 am
(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD	

Job fair

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Sub-Regional Employment Exchange Office, Bengaluru, is organising a job fair on April 7 from 8.30 am to 5 pm at Acharya Institutions, Dr S Radhakrishnan Road, Acharya Post, Soladevanahalli. Candidates with qualifications such as SSLC, PUC, degree, ITI, diploma, BE and postgraduate degrees can participate by registering on <https://docs.google.com/forms/u/7/d/1xEhF2ert9lag-BXmYn6jTje5MynEVE-Wt9c3jMI2DDPmQ/edit>. For more information, contact the Sub-Regional Employment Exchange Office at the COE Building, Government ITI, Tumakuru Road, according to a release.

Manual, partial property tax payments till March 31

Offices open till 10 pm, online till midnight today

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a relief to property owners facing glitches in the online tax system, city corporations across Bengaluru have decided to accept manual and partial property tax payments until March 31.

The move follows complaints from citizens and even government agencies that previous payments were not reflected in the online system, or that technical issues were

preventing fresh transactions. In some cases, taxpayers risked making duplicate payments due to these discrepancies.

In a circular, GBA Special Commissioner (Revenue) Munish Moudgil authorised zonal Joint Commissioners to accept payments through demand drafts and allow partial settlements for properties with valid SAS (Self-Assessment Scheme) IDs.

The directive aims to ensure that genuine taxpayers are not



Munish Moudgil

penalised due to system errors or delays.

The circular outlines three scenarios where this relaxation applies: when earlier payments are not reflected online, when technical issues prevent online transactions, and for payments by government departments or public sector undertakings.

To facilitate last-minute pay-

When are payment rules relaxed?

The circular outlines three scenarios where this relaxation applies:

■ When earlier payments are not reflected online.

■ When technical issues

prevent online transactions.

■ For payments made by government departments or public sector undertakings.

ments, all city corporation offices will remain open until 10 pm on March 31. Meanwhile, the online portal will continue to accept payments until 11.59 pm on the same day.

The decision is significant, as penalties and interest will be levied on unpaid dues after the financial year closes.

The manual acceptance

window is, therefore, seen as a stopgap measure to prevent revenue loss while addressing system inefficiencies.

The order also mandates strict documentation, including the issuance of proper acknowledgments and the maintenance of records for each transaction against property tax identification numbers.

Corpsns gear up for Census work; urge citizens to self-enumerate

BENGALURU, DHNS: All five city corporations in Bengaluru have begun preparations for Census 2027, which will be conducted from April 16 to May 15, enumerators will visit households to collect and verify house listing and housing census data. During these visits, citizens will be required to share their self-enumeration ID for verification and final submission of data.

The exercise will be conducted in two phases. Corporations are also in the process of appointing surveyors for household visits.

In the first 15 days, citizens can self-enumerate through the official portal (<https://se.census.gov.in>). The Centre has also introduced a digital feature to improve accuracy. Officials plan to self-enumerate as part of an awareness drive.

As per the guidelines, any one member of a household can complete the self-enumeration process, which takes approximately 15-20 minutes, and submit the required details. Upon completion, a self-enumeration ID will be generated and shared

via mobile or email, according to a press note.

In the second phase of Census 2027, which will be conducted from April 16 to May 15, enumerators will visit households to collect and verify house listing and housing census data. During these visits, citizens will be required to share their self-enumeration ID for verification and final submission of data.

Commissioners of all corporations have urged citizens to make full use of the self-enumeration option, noting that it enhances transparency, speed, and accuracy in census operations.

"Data collected through Census 2027 will serve as a crucial foundation for future urban planning, infrastructure development, and public welfare programmes. Therefore, active participation by citizens through accurate self-enumeration is essential," officials said.

Police book Rapido captain over molestation of woman passenger

Victim shares video as evidence

BENGALURU, DHNS



A Rapido bike rider has been arrested for allegedly molesting a woman passenger during a ride from BTM Layout to Indiranagar.

The accused 21-year-old Mohammed Khaja, a resident of DJ Halli, was riding a Rapido bike (KA-03-JR-6169) when the incident occurred.

A senior police officer said the 25-year-old complainant, a resident of Indiranagar, booked the ride around 8.10 pm on March 26.

During the journey, Khaja allegedly behaved inappropriately and repeatedly touched her despite her objections. He also sought permission to touch her inappropriately, the complaint stated.

Sensing danger, the woman contacted a friend and informed her about the situation.

Acting on the friend's advice, she began recording a video of the incident. Despite noticing that he was being re-

Rapido acts swiftly; removes accused driver

In a statement, Rapido said, "The behaviour described is unacceptable and has no place on our platform. The individual involved has been immediately disbanded, and we are extending our full cooperation to the authorities as the investigation progresses. "We uphold a gold standard in safety, with all captains undergoing

stringent onboarding processes that include background verification, KYC checks, and world-class training in conduct and safety.

"This is a clear case of individual misconduct and does not reflect the standards we expect from our captain community. We remain committed to swift and decisive action in all such instances."

corded, the accused continued his misconduct.

"The victim has shared the video footage of the incident as evidence," the police

officer added.

Based on the complaint, Indiranagar police registered a case of sexual harassment and arrested the accused.

Dispute between house owner, tenants turns violent; FIR filed

BENGALURU, DHNS

A dispute between a house owner and tenants over utility charges turned violent in Jeevan Bima Nagar, with both sides alleging assault.

A complaint and counter complaint have been filed.

A senior police officer said the incident took place on Sunday in Kodihalli. The tenants—Naresh, his brother Sachin and sister Rekha—had moved into

the house a week ago.

Trouble began when the house owner, Shobha, and her children asked Naresh to provide his Aadhaar card for the rental agreement and demanded higher utility charges for gas and water.

The tenant refused to pay as he had moved in only a week ago, leading to a heated argument.

The altercation escalated into a physical fight, and the house owner's family allegedly

assaulted Naresh, Sachin and Rekha. In a fit of rage, both sides attacked each other with a spoon and a sharp tool, causing injuries to the face, head and other parts of the body.

Naresh and his siblings were treated at Victoria Hospital before approaching the police.

Based on his complaint, an FIR has been registered at the Jeevan Bima Nagar police station. Shobha also filed a counter complaint, and further investigation is underway.

25 phones go missing at IPL

BENGALURU, DHNS: Cubbon Park police have launched an investigation after receiving around 25 complaints of phones lost during the IPL 2026 opening match between RCB and SRH on Saturday.

The incident came to light after a netizen raised the issue in a video shared on social media. "My husband realised his phone was missing after the first innings when he went to get water. At the same time, there were lots of people complaining about the same," the woman claimed.

"We have received around 25 complaints, and investigations have been launched," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Hakay Akshay Machhindra said. Officials said there was a possibility that the phones were stolen or lost outside the stadium while people were walking or exiting the Metro, and realised it was missing only after entering the premises.

A few minors were detained on suspicion of theft.

Over 600 booked for drunk driving in crackdown

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) conducted a week-long special drive across the city, booking motorists for drunk driving and speeding.

The drive, held from March 23 to 29, involved personnel from all 53 traffic police stations.

Officers checked 42,642 vehicles at multiple checkpoints.

The crackdown, aimed at curbing reckless driving during late hours, resulted in 616 cases of drunk driving. Data released by the BTP on Monday showed the drive covered the entire city to deter repeat offenders and ensure road safety.

"The primary objective of this special drive is to reduce road fatalities and ensure that the city's streets are safe for

everyone. Drunk driving and speeding are two of the biggest contributors to accidents in Bengaluru," a senior traffic police officer said.

In addition to alcohol checks, police deployed interceptors and speed-sensing cameras to catch those exceeding speed limits. A total of 279 cases were booked for speeding.



Police collected a total fine of Rs 2,80,000 from speed-limit violators. They said such surprise checks would continue in the coming weeks, particularly on accident-prone and high-speed stretches.

The BTP has urged citizens to follow traffic rules and refrain from driving under the influence, noting that the heightened vigil is part of a strategy to bring down the city's accident rate.

3 cops suspended for off-duty fines, cam tampering

BENGALURU, DHNS: Three police personnel from the High Grounds Traffic Police Station were suspended on Monday for allegedly extending duty hours and collecting fines while keeping their body-worn cameras turned off.

The action follows public complaints about unauthorised vehicle checks in the High Grounds area.

After an internal probe,

DCP (Traffic, West) Anoop A Shetty issued suspension orders against Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Suresh G and police constables Sadiq Pasha and Prashanth.

High Grounds Traffic Police said that despite departmental rules requiring all field officers to keep their body-worn cameras active during enforcement, the three had switched them off.

On the day of the incident, the officers' official shift was to end at 4 pm. They reportedly extended duty by 15 minutes without authorisation to target motorists and collect fines for personal benefit.

Traffic police have urged citizens to report such instances of harassment or demands for spot fines without a valid digital receipt through the Public Eye portal or by calling 112.

Design, Build, Launch: IN-SPACE invites entries for 2026 student rocket competitions

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE) has opened applications for the second edition of IN-SPACE Model Rocketry and the third edition of CAN-7USAT India Student Competition 2026.

Undergraduate teams from engineering and science streams can apply.

The 'Model Rocketry' competition involves the design, development and launch of a model rocket carrying a CAN-size (7U) satellite of 1 kg mass,

which must reach an altitude of 1,000 metres above the launch site. The mission also requires safe ejection of the CAN-7USAT and precision targeted landing of the rocket after separation.

The CAN-7USAT competition involves the design, development and launch of a CAN-size (7U) satellite of 1 kg mass to an altitude of 1,000 metres above the launch site.

The objective includes achieving precision targeted landing of the CAN-7USAT upon release from the rocket at a predefined location.

Through these competitions,

students will learn the fundamentals of rocketry and satellite making while developing skills such as team building, cooperation, project management, and interpersonal communication.

Over several months, teams will work through engineering processes involved in building a launch vehicle and satellite and compete for a place in the national-level final in Kushinagar.

The last date for applications is April 30. The national-level finals for both competitions are expected between October and November in Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh.

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Infant swallows flower, chokes to death

HUNSUR (MYSURU DIST), DHNS: A six-month-old baby boy died on Saturday, after accidentally swallowing a hibiscus flower kept on the doorstep for puja at his house in Doddahajjuru village of the taluk.

The deceased, Chinmayi Gowda, was the second son of Sudarshan and Navya. The tragedy occurred while the infant was playing with his elder brother inside the house.

Officials said the child picked up the flower and swallowed it. Soon, he experienced severe respiratory distress and struggled to breathe.

His parents rushed him to hospital for emergency care, but the child failed to respond to treatment and passed away. Hunsur rural station PSI Radha confirmed the incident and said no formal case had been registered.

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Rastreeya Gowrava Awardee
20-10-1952 to 25-3-2026
He will be remembered in the quiet strength he carried, in the lives he shaped, and in the love he gave so effortlessly
Fondly Remembered by
His Wife (G Gayathri), Son (Mathang Thyagaraj), Family & Friends

Respect Kannada language, culture: VTU fiat to students & staff

VC warns disciplinary action if directive is violated

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) has issued directions to all affiliated colleges to ensure that everyone, including staff and students, respect Kannada language and culture.

The university has issued a set of directives for students and staff of the affiliated colleges to follow. It has warned of disciplinary action against those who violate the directives.

“The colleges must communicate the same to the students and staff. Disrespecting Kannada language and culture cannot be tolerated,” reads the circular. The directions have been issued following a letter from the Kannada Development Authority (KDA) to ensure that Kannada language is respected at university-affiliated colleges and hostels.

This followed an incident reported at AMC engineering college, Bengaluru, where a college hostel warden insisted



The university has issued a set of directives for students and staff of the affiliated colleges to follow.

that students speak in Hindi.

A video of the warden scolding a student who was speaking in Kannada and asking him to speak in Hindi and keep Kannada at home, has gone viral.

Following the incident, Kannada activists staged a protest and demanded action against the warden.

Vidyashankar S, the VTU vice chancellor, said, “Kannada is the language of our land and it is the responsibility of every citizen to respect the language. We have 220 affiliated colleges, with 3 lakh students. As there are students from outside Karnataka and India, we are taking all necessary mea-

sures to ensure that Kannada is respected at all levels. Since some unpleasant instances have been reported, we have issued guidelines to prevent such incidents.”

“If anyone violates the directives issued regarding Kannada, disciplinary action will be initiated as per law,” the VC said.

Inside the classrooms, in the campus or in the hostel, no word disrespecting Kannada should be used by any of the students and staff, the circular stated.

It may be recalled that the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences had recently constituted a Kannada Sangha at the university to promote Kannada and to ensure the implementation of the language at all levels.

JATRE JAM-PACKED



A large number of devotees take part in the annual car festival at Nanjangud in Mysuru district on Monday. DH PHOTO/ANUP RAGH T

Commercial taxes DC trapped while taking Rs 6 lakh bribe

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Lokayukta police trapped a senior Commercial Tax officer while allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 6 lakh, officials said on Monday.

The arrested officer is Bharath Kumar Hegde, 48, Deputy Commissioner, Commercial Tax (GST), Hubballi.

The complainant, a 53-year-old resident of Jayanagar, told Lokayukta police officials that Hegde had demanded Rs 10 lakh to adjudicate an inspection report in which the complainant was reported as having evaded tax to the tune of Rs 60 lakh.

Following negotiations, the bribe amount was brought

down to Rs 6 lakh, the officials said.

Then, the complainant approached the Lokayukta police and lodged a complaint.

Based on this, the Lokayukta police set up a trap and caught Hegde red-handed on Monday when he accepted the Rs 6 lakh bribe.

“The Accused Government Officer (AGO) is secured, and investigation is on,” the Lokayukta police said.

Hegde was booked under the Prevention of Corruption Act. Further investigation is underway.

The operation was conducted under the supervision of Shiv Prakash Devaraju, Superintendent of Police, Karnataka Lokayukta, Bengaluru City-1.

Govt notifies rules for gig workers law

BENGALURU, DHNS: Every aggregator platform must constitute a dispute resolution committee of minimum six members to resolve issues faced by gig workers, as per the Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Rules.

The rules, published in the gazette on March 26, note that each such internal dispute resolution committee must comprise a president, two managing staff, and at least three senior gig workers. The committee must have at least two female members.

The rules mandate that

aggregator companies (Swiggy, Zomato, Ola, Uber and so on) should pay the welfare fee once every three months.

As per the rules, the gig workers, who register with the Gig Workers Welfare Board, can avail of facilities such as life insurance, accident, medical and physical handicap benefits, protection for aged persons and so on. Within seven days of information about any violation, the concerned gig worker can register a complaint with relevant documents and information with the internal grievance redressal committee.

Grading for 3rd language purely politics: Ashoka

‘Students prepared for entire year to write exam’

BENGALURU, DHNS

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R Ashoka on Monday slammed the state government’s decision to introduce a grading system for the third language in the SSLC exams (overall marks to be reduced from 625 to 525) as ‘purely politics’.

The School Education and Literacy Department’s decision will be applicable for the ongoing SSLC examination.

Addressing a press conference, Ashoka said: “This decision has been taken when students have prepared for a year to write the exams. If the government had any common sense, they should have decided in the beginning itself. Now, lakhs of students have studied Hindi day and night. This would’ve added to their percentage. This is a unilateral decision... Are they playing around?”

Noting that children will be very sensitive, Ashoka said the decision was an ‘injustice’ to the students.

Ashoka dubbed Urdu a ‘foreign’ and ‘non-Indian’ language and accused the Con-

Will you close down Hindi dept in varsities?: Horatti

Terming the government’s move to give grades for the third language in SSLC examinations and not considering that while calculating the overall percentage as a wrong decision, Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti on Monday asked the government to withdraw the decision and retain the earlier system, reports DHNS from Hubballi.

“This is a wrong move. How can grades be given for a language subject, like sports and drawing? Demand may come to give grades for other subjects also, such as English. Not knowing Hindi causes

difficulty when we visit other parts of the country. Third language is not just Hindi, but also Sanskrit, Urdu, Marathi and other languages,” he said.

“I will write to the chief minister and speak to him. I have already spoken to the chief secretary and the education department secretary,” Horatti told reporters here.

“Grading system for SSLC third language is not correct. All universities have Hindi departments. Will you close them all down? Tomorrow (March 31) is the examination. How will students feel due to such a decision?,” he said.

gress of promoting it for the sake of votes.

He recalled that Mahatma Gandhi founded the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha in 1918.

“How will you respect Mahatma Gandhi? When Gandhi’s name was removed from the NREGA scheme, they behaved as though a great injustice had happened. Why don’t you do a similar thing now?”

He also pointed out that

former prime ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi had also promoted the three-language formula.

“If Kannada children study IAS and IPS and go to Hindi-speaking states, what language will they speak there? This decision has been taken only out of anger against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This is nothing but vote bank politics and an act of throwing stones in the lives of children.”

D K Suresh against legislators demanding free IPL tickets

BENGALURU, DHNS: Congress leader and Baul president D K Suresh on Monday stated that legislators demanding free IPL tickets was “wrong”.

“Those who wish to watch the match should personally pay and watch it,” Suresh told reporters here.

Suresh reminded how the same legislators criticised the IPL, following the stadium stampede that claimed 11 lives. “Tickets are being given since the beginning. But now, the issue is being used for political propaganda. Even BJP legislators have received IPL tickets. Also, IPL is not a tournament where national team plays. It is a commercial event. So, public representatives should not focus on such matters,” he said.

Responding to a question on shifting the Chinnaswamy Stadium, he said, “Bengaluru needs four stadiums in four directions. Apart from Kanteerava stadium, KSCA and the football stadium, there are no other major facilities”.

“As an MP, I had proposed reserving 100 acres for stadiums at Surya City and the project was approved in the Cabinet. A world-class stadium will come up on 50-60 acres. I also urged the deputy chief minister to build a stadium in Shivaram Karanth Layout through BDA. A stadium in Bidadi is under discussion,” he added.

Bear strays into Shivamogga Airport; captured later

SHIVAMOGGA, DHNS

Perhaps it was curiosity or the urge to travel, but a seven-year-old sloth bear jumped a barrier and wandered into the Shivamogga Airport near Sogane on Monday, where it lingered briefly before exiting the premises and roaming about in the villages around the terminal. The bear, which was affixed with a radio collar, was subsequently captured by a team of 20 foresters, who released it into the rehabilitation centre near Tyavarekoppa.

Panic gripped the locals at Vinayak Nagar, which is under the purview of the Sogane gram panchayat, when the



A seven-year-old sloth bear affixed with a radio collar around its neck jumped a barrier and entered the Shivamogga Airport on Monday.

bear materialised in their midst all of a sudden. It subsequently wandered into neighbouring Jyothinagar, and then to Doddabeelu village. It then

returned to the airport, where the foresters tried to capture the bear, but it escaped and strayed into the premises of an Anganwadi centre in Jyo-

thinagar.

Intimated by the Tunganagar police, a team from the Forest Department, including veterinary officer Muralimohan, rushed to the airport. However, it was at the Anganwadi centre that the bear was tranquillised and captured. After medical treatment, the bear was released into the rehabilitation centre near the Tyavarekoppa zoo.

Forest Department official Ravindra Kumar M told DH, “The radio collar around the bear’s neck proved very useful in tracking the animal. The collar must have been tied around its neck for some study. It will be handed over to the zoo after a few days.”

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I, JAGRUTI BEN PIPALIYA R/a, #1903, Shapoorji Pallonji Parkwest Tower 4 Maple Magadi road, Binnyet Bengaluru -560024 Have Changed My Name From JAGRUTI BEN PIPALIYA TO JAGRUTIBEN PARSOTAMBHAI PIPALIYA vide Affidavit Dated 28/03/2026 before Notary Mohammed Hussain.K Bangalore

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After caste survey, teachers now deputed on census

"Keeping this in mind, the authorities concerned must take a decision on exempting female teachers above 50 years from the census work. If giving exemption is going to affect the SIR and the census work, then the request need not be considered," the letter adds.

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Rs 30k cr in arrears, blocked capex: CAG report raps govt

Calls for monetisation of idle government assets

BHARATH JOSHI
BENGALURU, DHNS

The state government, struggling with rising expenditure and increased dependence on debt, was found sitting on nearly Rs 30,000 crore in revenue arrears and 'blocked' capital, according to a Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) report.

The report, tabled in the legislature recently, found that the government had Rs 24,917 crore of revenue arrears under Goods and Services Tax (GST)

and excise for the fiscal ending March 31, 2025.

In fact, the total GST arrears stood at Rs 52,971.23 crore. This included Rs 28,887.3 crore under litigation. Similarly, the excise arrears of Rs 601.78 crore involved recoveries stayed by the High Court. The remaining Rs 24,917.22 crore arrears have no litigation.

"An efficient collection mechanism should increase the revenue realisation for the state," the CAG said.

The CAG also found that the state had 4,328 incom-

Incomplete projects as on March 31, 2025			
Year	Number of incomplete projects	Estimated cost	Expenditure incurred
Up to 2014-15	25	Rs 111 cr	Rs 75 cr
2015-16	77	Rs 350 cr	Rs 264 cr
2016-17	102	Rs 463 cr	Rs 350 cr
2017-18	122	Rs 553 cr	Rs 417 cr
2018-19	135	Rs 610 cr	Rs 460 cr
2019-20	275	Rs 1,244 cr	Rs 939 cr
2020-21	390	Rs 637 cr	Rs 278 cr
2021-22	467	Rs 776 cr	Rs 369 cr
2022-23	558	Rs 903 cr	Rs 440 cr
2023-24	789	Rs 1,947 cr	Rs 485 cr
2024-25	1,388	Rs 3,906 cr	Rs 990 cr
Total	4,328	Rs 11,500 cr	Rs 5,067 cr

plete projects costing an estimated Rs 11,500 crore. Until 2024-25, the government had spent Rs 5,067 crore on these 'incomplete' projects. "Therefore, due to non-completion of these 4,328 projects, capital expenditure of Rs 5,067 crore remained blocked," the

audit stated. "Blocking funds in incomplete projects/works impinges negatively on the quality of expenditure and deprives the state of the intended benefits for prolonged periods."

Of the 4,328 works, 276 were shown as 'incomplete'

due to pending payment of bills worth Rs 2,298 crore, the CAG pointed out.

The CAG called for strengthening tax compliance, widening tax base, revision of user charges and monetisation of idle government assets.

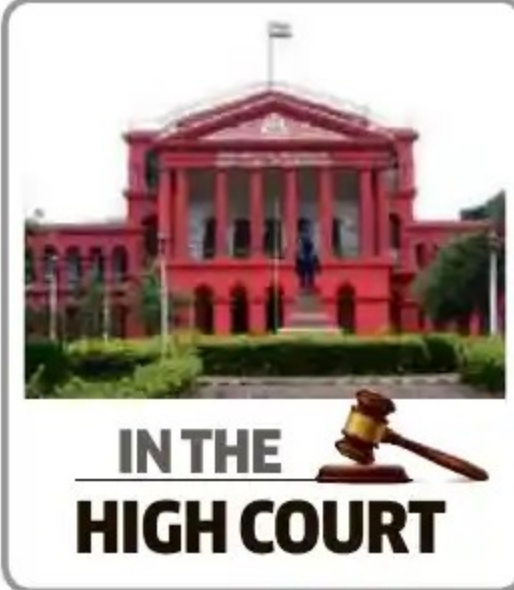
On the spending side, the premier audit body pitched for better targeting of subsidies, controlling salary and pension growth and proper classification of expenditure.

Executive orders

For the fiscal ending March 2025, the government released Rs 10,035.13 crore through executive orders prior to legislative approval. This was "contrary" to Constitution Article 266(3), the CAG said. The state should "avoid resorting to executive route of incurring expenditure before legislature sanction," it said.

HC refuses to interfere with yoga teacher's arrest on charges of cheating

'Police searched petitioner for 40 days to hand over physical copy of notice'



A complaint was filed on December 3, 2025 for criminal breach of trust, misappropriation and causing wrongful loss and the Adugodi police in Bengaluru registered an FIR on December 9, 2025.

BENGALURU, DHNS

The high court has refused to entertain the petition by a yoga teacher on the grounds of illegal arrest in a crime alleging cheating by soliciting people to invest in a company to register as yoga teachers.

Justice M Nagaprasanna noted that the police had been searching for the petitioner to hand over the physical copy of 35(3) notice for 40 days and that this would be enough circumstance to take him into custody for non-cooperative behaviour.

The petitioner, Yugadev R, and his wife started a company named Jai Bhairavi Devi (JBD) Financial Solutions and opened a website soliciting investments.

The complainants transferred Rs 98 lakh to the account in the name of Yugadev's wife.

A complaint was filed on December 3, 2025 for criminal breach of trust, misappropriation and causing wrongful loss and the Adugodi police in Bengaluru registered an FIR on December 9, 2025.

According to the prosecution, the police were searching for Yugadev to serve a notice

under BNSS section 35(3), while he dodged the police for more than 40 days.

The police finally traced him to Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu and served him the notice. On January 17, 2026, he was taken into custody after he refused to cooperate.

According to the yoga teacher, the police failed to digitally or physically serve the notice under BNSS section 35(3) on the petitioner and thus failed to follow the guidelines issued by the Apex Court.

It was further submitted that the matter is purely civil in nature. It was contended that in the event the petitioner had not cooperated, it was for the police to draw a mahazar that he had refused to accept the notice, intimate to the higher authorities and then take him to custody.

On the other hand, the state submitted that the police had made every effort since the date of registration of FIR by calling him for over 40 days and he kept on moving from one place to another to escape arrest.

Justice Nagaprasanna perused the call record details of the accused/petitioner and said it revealed that he was roaming all over the place and finally police found him at Cuddalore after 40 days.

The police have drawn reasons for arrest that the accused has been absconding, the court said. The arrest made in strict consonance with the findings of the Apex Court in Satinder Kumar Antil vs CBI case judgment, the court said.

"Issuance of notice under Section 35(3) for offences punishable with imprisonment up to 7 years is the rule and arrest under Section 35(6) read with Section 35(1) (b) is an exception. The apex court holds that if police have reasons to believe that the accused is not cooperating with the investigation, those reasons to believe can form the grounds of arrest," Justice Nagaprasanna said.

The court said, "The Apex Court holds that electronic communication of the crime or any other communication is not what the legislature has thought of. Section 35(3) does not empower the police to communicate an electronic copy or by WhatsApp the notice or copy of the FIR. It has to be mandatorily given physically. Therefore, the police have been searching for the petitioner to hand over a physical copy of 35(3) notice for 40 days. This would be enough circumstance to take the petitioner into custody for non-cooperative behaviour".

Man dies of heart attack at car festival

NANJANGUD (MYSURU DIST), DHNS: A 54-year-old man from Magadi in Bengaluru South district died of a heart attack at the Srikanteshwara Rathotsava here on Monday. There were rumours that there was a stampede. But police said there was no stampede.

The deceased, Nanjundadaswamy, had arrived with his son and daughter-in-law. He reached the chariot road at 5 am. He collapsed due to exhaustion and was rushed to hospital, where he was declared dead, police said.

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Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer/AP

CPCB notice to tyre producers, recyclers

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Central Pollution Control Board has issued show-cause notices to tyre waste recyclers and producers for failing to file annual returns.

As per Hazardous and Other Waste (Management and Transboundary Movement)



Amendment Rules, 2022, tyre producers and recycling units have to file quarterly and annual returns in the web portal of the Union government.

In separate notices is-

sued to 140 producers and 238 recyclers, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has questioned the units for failing to file the returns for the years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 as applicable.

It further noted that environmental compensation of Rs 25,000 will be levied for submission of returns within 15 days from the last deadline.

The compensation will go up further up to Rs 1 lakh for those filing after 60 days.

Launched with fanfare, govt cow shelters remain underutilised in state

VITTAL SHASTRI
KALABURAGI, DHNS:

Many cow shelters (goshalas) established by the state government in 2021-22 are underutilised or have remained empty.

Of the total 48 cow shelters announced by the government, construction of 36 is complete, 9 are under construction and work on the other three has not yet started due to non-availability of land. Government cow shelters house only 1,552 cattle compared to 49,873 cattle in 256 registered private goshalas in the state.

Private cow shelters are started by NGOs, religious institutions and trusts over

last two decades.

Purpose defeated?

Animal lovers contended that government cow shelters have failed to serve their purpose as local government bodies have not shifted stray cattle, despite a Supreme Court order last November.

According to the 2019 Livestock Census, Karnataka has approximately 77,000 stray cattle. Animal lovers argue that these stray cattle, particularly in urban areas, ingest large amount of plastic waste from dumpsters, leading to severe health issues and often death and they also pose severe problem to the traffic, resulting in several accidents.

The project to establish goshalas envisages the construction of specialised facilities across all districts to house, feed and care for stray, abandoned and unproductive cattle, following the implementation of the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Act, 2020.

Stray cattle

Animal lovers have underscored the urgent need to relocate stray cattle to these goshalas, citing chronic fodder shortages, drinking water scarcity and shrinking grazing land, especially as Karnataka braces for a harsh summer with forecasts of above-normal maximum temperatures



According to the 2019 Livestock Census, Karnataka has approximately 77,000 stray cattle.

in April and May.

The previous government approved Rs 15 crore in 2021 to establish a cow shelter in each district, and an additional Rs 50 crore was earmarked to in-

D'gere South: Cong has task cut out to secure Muslim votes

Mallikarjun-Zameer spat impacting party's campaign

NRUPATHUNGA S K
DAVANGERE, DHNS

Reports of maulvis in exhorting Muslim voters in the Davanagere South Assembly constituency to back the Muslim candidate in the upcoming by-election has further fuelled anxiety among local Congress leaders, particularly the party's candidate Samarth Mallikarjun, and his father S S Mallikarjun, who is also the Davanagere district in-charge minister.

The grandson of Congress veteran Shamanur Shivashankarappa, whose death necessitated the by-election, Samarth is keen on securing the support of the Muslims, who account for 80,000 of the 2.32 lakh voters in the constituency.

Queried about the maulvis' diktats to the Muslim community, Karnataka Pradesh Con-

gress Committee's (KPCC) legal cell organising secretary Anis Pasha conceded that they could have discussed the issue informally. "But we have a strategy to counter it," Pasha told *DH*.

14 Muslims in fray

The field for the Davanagere South by-election is densely packed with 25 candidates in the fray, of whom 14, including Congress rebel Sadiq Pailwan, hail from the Muslim community. Interestingly enough, former Union Minister C M Ibrahim recently campaigned for Khadar Adil Basha, who is contesting the bypoll as an Independent.

KPCC working president Saleem Ahmed acknowledged that division in Muslim votes would invariably benefit the BJP. "We are meeting Muslim candidates and requesting them to back the Congress. We are convincing them that had Shamanur been alive, he would have completed the reminder of his term. That is why the party decided to give the ticket to a member of his family," Ahmed told *DH*.

Meanwhile, the ongoing

Sources in the Congress party said Mallikarjun (candidate Samarth's father) was banking more on AICC general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala to win over Muslim voters.

feud between Mallikarjun and Housing Minister B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan has cast a shadow on the Congress's campaign in the constituency. Mallikarjun's observation that the party would have been better served had Khan not campaigned in the segment has added to the tension within the party. Incensed by Mallikarjun's remarks, Khan's supporters took to social media to vent their ire.

Online commentators too have opined that Mallikarjun appears to be setting himself against one community, with many wondering if he was serious about ensuring a victorious start to his son's political journey. Sources in the Congress party said that Mallikarjun was banking more on AICC general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala to win over the Muslim voters.

A SENSE OF CENSUS



A tableau in the procession organised to mark Mahaveer Jayanti educates Jain community on the upcoming general census in Belagavi on Monday. DH PHOTO/EKNATH AGASIMANI

PM lauds B'luru institute's research-led school model

BENGALURU, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday held up Bengaluru-based Prayoga Institute of Education Research as a national model for making scientific inquiry accessible to school students, noting that such initiatives could nurture India's future Nobel laureates.

In the 132nd episode of his monthly radio address, Mann Ki Baat, he highlighted Prayoga's flagship 'Anveshana' programme, which allows students from grades 9 to 12 to step out of the classroom and into the lab.

The prime minister observed that while many students express a fear of science during interactions like Pariksha Pe Charcha, hands-on initiatives like Anveshana help bridge this gap by replacing intimidation with curiosity.

Based off Kanakapura Road, Prayoga's Anveshana engages students in high-level research across chemistry, earth sciences and wellness. Unlike traditional rote learning, the pedagogy encourages stu-



A screen grab from the Mann Ki Baat programme, in which the PM highlighted the institute's role in popularising science.

dents to navigate uncertainty and tackle real-world scientific challenges.

Since its inception in 2022, the programme has provided laboratory infrastructure and mentorship from experienced scientists to students, many of whom come from underprivileged backgrounds. The PM's recognition comes close on the heels of a significant breakthrough by four students from rural Karnataka.

Under Anveshana, the students developed an environmentally sustainable method to synthesise copper oxide nanoparticles using plant-based extracts.

Their research, which has potential applications in water

purification, was published in an international peer-reviewed journal, a rare feat for high schoolers.

The students were recently felicitated by the state government for their contribution to green chemistry.

Responding to the PM's praise, H S Nagaraja, founder and chief mentor of Prayoga, said the recognition had boosted the team's morale.

"We are currently reaching over 12,000 government school students, enabling them to learn through experiential methods. Importantly, this is provided free of cost to ensure quality research isn't limited by one's economic background," he said.

Fuel duty cut signals budget squeeze

A recalibration of fuel prices in India was inevitable due to the war in West Asia and the resultant crude crunch. The choking of the Hormuz Strait added a sense of urgency, pushing the government to slash the special excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 10 per litre, reducing it to Rs 3 on petrol and zero on diesel. International crude prices have moved up to \$116 per barrel, and global fuel prices have spiked by 30-50%. The government's move was imperative because Indian oil marketing companies (OMCs) were under serious margin pressure – they have been incurring losses of around Rs 24 for petrol and Rs 30 for diesel, per litre, at current market prices.

The cut in the excise duty will partially help to offset the OMCs' under-recovery. They are unlikely to pass the benefit on to the consumers because the cut does not fully compensate for their losses. The burden has now shifted to the government. Excise earnings from the petroleum sector account for a significant share of government revenues at the Centre and in the states. The sector's total contribution to the exchequer, including taxes, dividends, and royalties, in 2024-25 was Rs 7.4 lakh crore – Rs 4.15 lakh crore for the central government and Rs 3.25 lakh crore for the states. The net revenue loss from the current crunch is loosely estimated at over Rs 1 lakh crore. There is no certainty of this being the last reduction in duties. Earnings in 2026-27 from special additional excise duties on petrol and high-speed diesel were projected at Rs 1.69 lakh crore. The revenue shortfall, even based on present estimates, will be substantial and can adversely affect budgetary calculations.

The course of the war remains uncertain, raising fears of further disruptions in crude movement and a heightened supply crunch. These escalations can drive crude prices higher, forcing more rounds of price adjustments. The government has also imposed an export tax on diesel, as part of efforts to disincentivise exports, and to ensure that the domestic demand is met. Being heavily dependent on imports, India has few options for managing fuel prices. Some countries have already started rationing and brought in changes in work schedules. The government has denied any plan for rationing. Retail prices have been kept unchanged in view of the Assembly elections in four states and a Union Territory. Pump prices are likely to see a rise after the polls.

OBC creamy layer: Revision with risks

The Karnataka government's proposal to raise the income ceiling for the Other Backward Classes' (OBC) creamy layer from Rs 8 lakh to Rs 12.75 lakh signals a significant policy shift, but warrants careful and dispassionate scrutiny. The current threshold, unchanged since 2018, has increasingly been criticised as outdated in the face of inflation and wage revisions following the Seventh Pay Commission, which have pushed many beneficiaries into higher pay brackets and potentially rendered them ineligible for quotas. There are arguments for revisiting the limit to prevent the exclusion of middle-class families whose nominal incomes have risen without a corresponding improvement in social mobility. It may also address concerns that the existing ceiling has become a barrier for sections that continue to face structural disadvantages despite modest economic gains. In that sense, a revision could restore a degree of balance to the eligibility framework.

At the same time, the possible downsides are equally significant. A higher income ceiling risks expanding the pool of beneficiaries to include relatively advanced sections within OBCs, crowding out the most marginalised groups. The creamy layer principle was introduced to ensure that reservation benefits do not disproportionately accrue to the better-off within backward classes. Any dilution of this filter could undermine that objective and sharpen intra-group disparities. The issue gains complexity in light of the recent Supreme Court ruling, which clarified that income cannot be the sole determinant of creamy layer status and social and occupational factors must also be considered. Drawing from the original intent of the Mandal Commission, it underscored that social backwardness, not merely economic criteria, lies at the heart of the reservation policy. This raises important questions about whether a simple upward revision of the monetary threshold, in isolation, would withstand legal scrutiny.

In this context, the importance of empirical data becomes central. The State has at its disposal the findings of the Socio-Economic and Educational Survey, which provides detailed insights into disparities across communities. Any revision of the creamy layer ceiling must be grounded in such evidence, in line with the principles laid down in *Indra Sawhney vs Union of India*, which require a rigorous and contemporaneous assessment of backwardness. The proposed revision, therefore, cannot be viewed merely as an administrative decision. It carries implications for the balance within the reservation system. In navigating this terrain, the State government would do well to exercise caution, weighing both the need for periodic revision and the risk of unintended consequences, before arriving at a decision.

As fears rise over a prolonged war, the relief for OMCs may translate into a burden on public finances

A raised income ceiling promotes inclusion, but reform must also be shaped by data and social markers

COMMENT

STATECRAFT OF MEDIATION

Name-calling dents India's diplomatic legacy

Recent rhetoric is not in line with the nation's strong tradition of conciliation during global conflicts

LT GEN BHOPINDER SINGH (RETD)

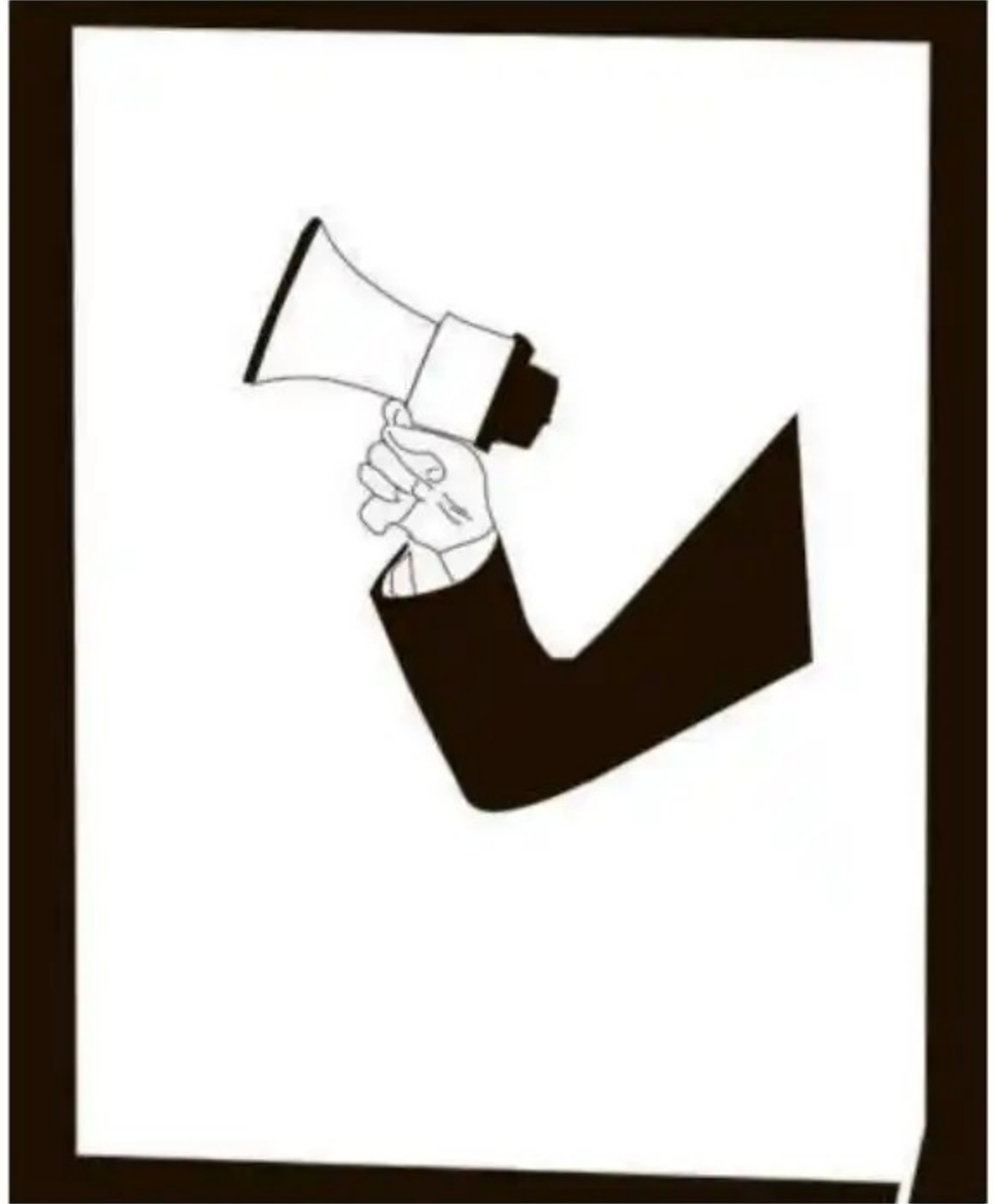
Addressing the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2022, Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar rightly said, "We are on the side that calls for dialogue and diplomacy as the only way out". It was a logical statement – made on the Russia-Ukraine war – for a proudly moral and internationalist nation. In such an interdependent world, mediation becomes a natural instrument for managing shared risks and stakes, and for resolving conflicts. India has been open to mediating if approached, as it is a "friend of peace" for both sides. Jaishankar also recalled a specific instance where Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi intervened to temporarily stop firing in Kharkiv and Sumy, respectively, to facilitate the safe passage for Indians stuck in the war.

Historically, India has had a strong and consistent record of mediatory and conciliatory moves in the international space. The anchorage of "non-alignment" afforded it respect that naturally accrues owing to practised neutrality. It was to deploy its neutrality in chairing the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission that oversaw the exchange of prisoners during the Korean War (1950-53). In the first Indochina War (entailing Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia), India chaired the International Control Commission (ICC) set up by the Geneva Accords. In the 1960s, India stabilised political negotiations amongst the warring factions and contributed significantly towards the UN peace-keeping troops in the Congo crisis. The global standing of internationally recognised leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, and Indira Gandhi allowed it to act as the diplomatic "bridge" and navigate between the bloc politics of the Cold War era.

Traditionally, mediation was not perceived as dodgy "brokering" or a sign of sovereign weakness, but as an honourable and necessary path to resolving global conflicts. It did not militate against perceptions of assertive and powerful governance. Indira Gandhi, who oversaw the splitting of Paki-

stan into two, was still wise enough to recognise that, "You can't shake hands with a clenched fist" – implying the criticality of engagement and promotion of active diplomacy over "sitting out". This tradition of using India's good offices and perceptions was a non-partisan reality as successive prime ministers from across the ideological divide offered to mediate in their own ways.

I K Gujral propounded the 'Gujral Doctrine', emphasising non-reciprocal goodwill amongst neighbours to emerge as the bigger, trustworthy, and reliable actor – a prerequisite for meaningful mediation. Stalwarts, including Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the doyen of the current dispensation's ideological underpinnings, P V Narasimha Rao, and Manmohan Singh, have



furthered the image of India as a mature and dignified democracy.

Today, international mediation is a strategic identity for Scandinavian countries, particularly Norway and Sweden. They actively leverage their neutrality, credibility, and development assistance to facilitate peace processes in global conflicts, such as the Oslo Accords (between Israel and Palestine) and Sri Lanka (during the Civil War).

The deceptive neighbour
India's neighbour and age-old nemesis, Pakistan, too, has mediated in global conflicts but in a starkly different manner. It has invariably had a dark or selfish interest to mediate, as opposed to doing so out of a sense of global responsibility. It had infamously facilitated Henry Kissinger's clandestine trip to China, which laid the foundation for Richard Nixon's historic visit to China in 1972. In return for its services, Pakistan received advanced weaponry and economic aid from the US, besides securing strate-

gic leverage with the US against India. During the Soviet-Afghan War, Pakistan surreptitiously interfered as opposed to mediate, thereby creating the Mujahideen movement that later birthed the Taliban. Later, Pakistan continued interfering with the intention of creating its much aspired "Strategic Depth" in Afghanistan by resorting to amoral factionalism. This earned Islamabad the notoriety of being a duplicitous and untrustworthy country, one that was only invoked and resorted to when no other option remained.

Today, seemingly that situation has emerged when a former Pakistan baiter, the US President Donald Trump, seeks mediation in its hopeless and embarrassing war on Iran. Who better than an economically and diplomatically squeezed Pakistan to offer its services to mediate between two desperate nations: the US and Pakistan's eastern neighbour, Iran? Both Washington and Tehran have had unreliable experiences with Pakistan, but the current situation warrants anyone who can step in and initiate mediation – even if that mediator is a historically unreliable Pakistan.

But the uncharitable ascribing of the pejorative term "*dalal* (broker) nation" onto Pakistan by the Indian Foreign Minister (on supposedly mediating between Iran and the US) was uncalled for, coming from a diplomatically mature nation like India. It almost seemed that Pakistan's fleet-footedness in grabbing the opportunity riled Jaishankar. The fact that Indian diplomacy had led Prime Minister Modi to make some overly saccharine statements in Israel just a couple of days before the breakout of the hostility hardly makes for great timing, considering that the war is not exactly going as per the wishes of the US-Israel duo. India, too, is seeking Iranian benevolence in ensuring smooth passage through the Strait of Hormuz for its own economic security.

So while the shadowy Pakistanis have offered their services to mediate, for India to call it a "*dalal* nation" is not keeping with the diplomatic refinement and professionalism associated with Indian diplomacy. The ostensible muscularity of name-calling, masquerading as diplomacy, may satiate the hardline partisan cadres, but it does not reflect a nation that has mediated honourably in the past and aspires to be the *Vishwa Guru* (world leader).

(The writer is a former lieutenant governor of Puducherry and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

When *Hamlet* streamed, pre-Internet

He knew we needed more than classroom conversations to spark a lifelong love of literature

M V SUNDARARAMAN

About 40 years ago, in the corridors of Christ College in Bengaluru, I sat in Prof Oommen Mathew's English literature classes. It had not struck me then that he found no use for the blackboard – he never wrote a word on it. Dressed in a simple *kurt*a and leather chappals, he would sit on the edge of the table, textbook in hand, and talk to us.

It didn't matter if the class was full or if only a handful of sleepy teenagers had turned up. He spoke with the same gusto and taught us with the same passion and love for literature every time. There was no hurry about him. Just a steady voice and complete attention to what he was reading to us. In our first year, he introduced us to Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*. He read it as if he knew the

Kellers personally. Their regret and unease came through every line he read. Now and then he would wander into small anecdotes about Miller's life, his Hollywood years – notably the famous "Egghead marries Hourglass" headline of his marriage with Marilyn Monroe – and then return to the lecture as if nothing had interrupted us. Then came Somerset Maugham's *The Lotus Eater*. I still remember him saying, "Capri wine, my eye", and smiling to himself for a moment as if in a reverie. He would describe the story's setting and message simply, but that has stayed with me.

My first real introduction to Shakespeare also came in his class. *Hamlet* unfolded through his voice and gestures. His narrations of the grave diggers' scene, the prince's soliloquies, and Ophelia's distress are all indelibly etched in my memory. He knew we needed more than just classroom conversations to spark a lifelong love for the subject. So, in an era long before YouTube and streaming, he arranged a screening on campus of Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet*. A television was brought to the auditorium, and a video cassette

was borrowed from Mount Carmel College. The thin turnout from our science batches did not seem to bother him. He watched it with us and eagerly pointed out details like costume and stage settings on the grainy screen.

Prof Mathew sowed seeds of my love for English writings with his simplicity and love for words. Looking back, what stands out now is how simple his approach to literature was. He never tried to be impressive. He just cared about the subject and about his students understanding it. After retirement, he lived in a modest home very close to the campus. I learnt. Driving past his house now evokes memories of the happy hours spent in his class befriending poets and playwrights.

When a friend posted Prof Mathew's obituary in our college group, it brought back many memories of college days. There is no easy way to measure what a teacher like Prof Mathew passes on to his students. He gave us literature to hold in our hearts – something we could fondly relate to and keep forever. Thank you, Prof Mathew – your classes have stayed with me, and so have you.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Karnataka should implement the two-language formula

The Karnataka state government has decided to do away with the policy of awarding marks for the third language in the SSLC exams and instead introduce a grade system ("Third language call marks priority shift", Mar 30). Consequently, the total marks have been reduced from 625 to 525. This decision, though commendable, should have been taken at the commencement of the academic year itself to allow students to plan better. It also implies

that students will be required to study only two languages seriously, as the third language does not affect the overall result. States such as Tamil Nadu rejected the three-language formula long ago. Karnataka must implement a two-language policy – English and Kannada. It is the most appropriate model that can be uniformly implemented across the country.

K R Jayaprakash Rao, Mysuru

protect national interests. Anand Mestru, Kalaburagi

Federalism above politics

While Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for Centre-state cooperation to address the West Asia crisis is timely, it is not entirely convincing, given that Opposition-ruled states are treated differently. True federalism demands equal partnership regardless of political colour, especially during national and international emergencies. The Centre should rise above partisan considerations and work collaboratively with all states at all times. Only genuine cooperation can strengthen India's response and

wider regional conflagration. The delicate balance between diplomacy and military escalation appears increasingly fragile. The situation is further complicated by the involvement of the Houthis in Yemen, opening an additional front against Israel. This expansion not only intensifies strategic complexity but also diminishes prospects for swift de-escalation.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: letters@deccanherald.co.in (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

I held discussions with the RCB team, the KSCA, and others... They have agreed to provide three tickets for RCB's IPL matches to our MLAs and MPs.

For international matches, the KSCA can provide two tickets.

D K Shivakumar, Karnataka Dy CM

A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both.

Dwight D Eisenhower

TO BE PRECISE



IN PERSPECTIVE

Undoing a hard-won right

By rolling back self-determination, the Transgender Bill signals a regressive tilt towards State control

ANAND GROVER

Parliament has passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026. Had it not passed in such haste, opposition to it would have become quite considerable, especially from the transgender and the broader LGBTQIA+ community.

What is it about the Bill that evoked such sharp responses opposing it? In 2014, the Supreme Court decided the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) matter relating to the right of transgender persons to the recognition of their gender. Until then, only two genders – male and female – were recognised in law. The petitioners argued for the recognition of the third gender. The Supreme Court noted that in ancient India, the social fabric included diverse transgender communities. Moreover, diverse religious scriptures – Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain – recognised transgender persons. In Islam, too, transgender persons were given their due recognition.

The Supreme Court's question was whether this should be determined by biological features or by psychological assessment. After examining laws in other countries, the Court specifically rejected the assessment based on biological or physical characteristics and adopted a psychological assessment. This implies that transgender persons themselves know whether a dissonance exists between their physical/biological sex and their feelings about their gender. The Supreme Court held that transgender identity would be determined by self-identification and the government would accord recognition to the identity on that basis. This formed the basis for rejecting the physical/biological assessment to determine whether a person is transgender or not.

The Transgender Act has been in existence for more than six years. It has not caused serious grievances regarding the process of determining the transgender status. This makes last week's move to formulate the Bill appear abrupt.

Section 2 of the Bill amends Section 2 of the Act. It recognises three categories of transgender persons. First, a person having such socio-cultural identities as *kinner*, *hijra*, *aravani*, and *jogta*, or eunuch. Second, a person with intersex variations specified below or a person who, at birth, has a congenital variation in one or more of the following sex characteristics as compared to male

or female development: (a) primary sexual characteristics; (b) external genitalia; (c) chromosomal patterns; (d) gonadal development; (e) endogenous hormone production or response, or such other medical conditions.

Third, a person or child who has been, by force, allurement, inducement, deceit or undue influence, either with or without consent, compelled to assume, adopt, or outwardly present a transgender identity, by mutilation, emasculation, castration, amputation, or any surgical, chemical, or hormonal procedure or otherwise.

The above-defined categories of persons must undergo an assessment by an authority led by a chief medical officer. The District Magistrate (DM) will consider this authority's recommendation when issuing a transgender identity certificate. The DM may require another set of 'medical experts' to examine the person before granting a certificate. This medicalised and bureaucratic procedure is a far cry from the simple self-determination mandated by NALSA.

Thus, it is evident that the psychological test expounded by the Supreme Court has been disregarded, and the biological test specifically rejected by the Supreme Court has been adopted. The physical or biological test would subject transgender persons to medical examinations by doctors who may lack empathy, which would be intrusive and could violate their right to privacy and bodily autonomy.

Exclusionary framework

It is not known why the government has chosen this amendment. Pertinently, no consultations have been held. What inputs were received and from which quarters is not known. The exclusion of the transgender community from these consultations is a serious flaw.

More striking is the proviso to Section 2. It says: "Provided that it shall not include, nor shall ever have been so included, persons with different sexual orientations and self-perceived sexual identities..." In other words, certificates issued earlier based on self-perceived gender identity will not be recognised in the future. That may be in line with the sentiments of the Bill, but the catch is in the phrase: "nor shall ever have been so included."

This would imply that previously issued transgender certificates would be subject to cancellation. This, in one stroke, takes away significant gains from the 2014 ruling.

The Act, when it comes into force, will be challenged by a host of actors. One only hopes that the courts will see the inherent injustice in this amendment and intervene to set the law right.

(The writer is a senior advocate practising in the Supreme Court. He argued the NALSA case)

Majoritarian frames: How *Haq* recasts the story of Shah Bano

EESHA SHROTRIYA AND
SHANTANU PACHAURI

The recent Netflix release of the social drama *Haq* has drawn attention for its focus on Muslim women's rights. It presents a story of legal reform that recentres majoritarian authority within a narrative of minority struggle. As a cultural text about law and justice, the film shapes how audiences understand reform and who drives it. Its framing casts the State and the majority as the main agents of change, while the efforts of Muslim women and lawyers fade into the background. At a moment when Muslim identity and women's rights are deeply politicised, such narrative choices carry particular weight.

Cultural texts that claim a progressive stance often influence how audiences make sense of law. Through narrative and character, they shape how people see

who suffers and what justice should look like. They are seldom neutral retellings of history. They are produced from somewhere, and they invite audiences to see from particular standpoints. In the Indian context, where legal change is deeply entangled with religious identity, such texts can quietly perform ideological work by translating contested legal histories into simplified moral narratives. This kind of narrative authority operates through omission as much as assertion.

The film draws on the legal battle of Shah Bano, who approached the courts seeking maintenance from her husband following divorce. Decided by the Supreme Court in 1985, the case marked a significant moment in Indian law by affirming that Muslim divorced women were entitled to maintenance under the general criminal law framework. The decision drew opposition from some Muslim religious groups, who argued that it displaced

Muslim personal law.

In the film, Shazia (the fictional counterpart of Shah Bano) is represented in the Supreme Court by Bela Jain, a non-Muslim lawyer. In reality, Shah Bano was represented by a prominent Muslim advocate, Daniel Latifi, whose role was central in the case. This substitution casts the non-Muslim lawyer as an almost redemptive figure through whom justice is made possible, while Shazia receives little meaningful support from her community.

Most Muslim characters are shown as oppositional, silent, or easily swayed; only Shazia and her father recognise the injustice, and even his support appears driven by familial duty rather than principle. This portrayal departs from the historical record, where Muslim women's organisations and advocacy networks actively mobilised around the case. By shifting agency away from the subjects of reform and toward external benevolence,

the film reshapes how justice and change are understood.

Shah Bano's claim had also provoked opposition from several Muslim bodies. That resistance was articulated in terms of religious autonomy and anxiety about expanding State authority over personal law. The film does present this opposing view, but the way the story conveys it is important. Fears of cultural erasure are voiced by an unsympathetic antagonist (Shazia's husband) and framed as manipulative. When these concerns are instantly dismissed by the heroic lawyer, the narrative invites the audience to dismiss them as well. This move matters because it reduces minority distrust to bad faith, rather than situating it within a history of uneven State action and contested citizenship that has shaped minority experience.

Trust in law comes from institutional conduct. People cooperate when the State proves reliable over time. Where citizen-

ship has been unevenly enforced through documentation regimes and selective action, scepticism toward new reforms is a rational response. In this context, the film's quick dismissal of minority concerns oversimplifies the political conditions that make such fears understandable. Minority appeals to constitutional principles are often treated as bad faith, and the film repeats this logic by assigning fear to an unlikeable character and dismissing it rather than taking it seriously.

The film closes with Shazia winning her right to maintenance, followed by a passing remark from the judge that a uniform civil code would resolve similar issues. An end title card then steps in to explain what happened after the events portrayed. It tells the viewer that the Shah Bano judgment was soon diluted by legislation introduced by the government of the time. This is factually correct, but it is only part of the story. The film omits

that Daniel Latifi challenged the law and that the Supreme Court interpreted it to protect Muslim women's maintenance rights and preserve the core of the *Shah Bano* ruling.

The title card notes that the present government criminalised triple talaq but does not mention that the Supreme Court had already declared the practice unconstitutional in *Shayara Bano* (2017). It skips the long, uneven legal history between the dilution of *Shah Bano* and this law, during which Muslim women repeatedly went to court and secured gains in maintenance, marital rights, and personal liberty.

By reducing this history to a sequence of State actions, the film offers a State-centred account of reform, where change appears to come from above and the sustained labour of Muslim women and their allies fade from view.

(The writers are assistant professors of law at the School of Law, RV University)

Tired of seeing its elementary-school children struggle with online temptations, the Irish town of Greystones proposed a 'no smart devices' code. Almost everyone bought in

SALLY MCGRANE

Twelve-year-old Bodie Mangan Gisleir says a smartphone can be quite handy. For one thing, he collects coins, and if he wants to know how much a special coin is worth or what metals it contains, he can ask his mother for her phone and get the answer.

Most 12-year-olds would demand a phone of their own. Not Bodie. "I want to live long and stay healthy," he said on a recent afternoon in his school library. But he worries that having a smart device might interfere with that. "Maybe I'll say to my mum, 'Can I download this one game?' And she'll say, 'Yeah.' And I'll get sucked in." His friend Charlie Hess, a fellow coin collector, nods in agreement. He wants to get a smartphone when he's 15 or 16. Until then, he says, "I think I have better things to do."

The kids are a little different here in Greystones. In 2023, the Irish seaside town just south of Dublin launched a grass-roots initiative led by local parents, school principals and community members to loosen the grip of technology on their younger children by adopting a voluntary "no smart devices" code and supporting it with workshops and social events.

Three years later, no one in Greystones claims to have cured the ills of modern technology. But they've learned that they can't do anything about it one child at a time. Only a townwide effort could defang the kids' "everyone else has one" argument.

"With social media, it's a collective thing," said Jennifer Whitmore, a member of Irish parliament and a Greystones mother of four. "Addressing it in a clustered manner is the way to go."

The movement, called "It Takes a Village," has since grown well beyond this small town of 22,000 residents. In a country that is home to the European headquarters of tech companies including Google, Meta, Microsoft, Apple and LinkedIn, and where the average firstborn child gets a smartphone at around age 9 (younger siblings tend to get them earlier), the effort has struck a chord with everyone from local shopkeepers to national politicians.

"It was one of the first places that took collective action," said Daisy Greenwell, who co-founded Britain's Smartphone Free Childhood movement later the same year — inspired, in part, by Greystones. "It made me think that we could shift the culture here, too."

Before he held his current position as Ireland's deputy prime minister, Simon Harris, a Greystones father, helped launch the project. "I believe we are effectively seeing the experimentation with our young people's mental health and well-being with social media," said Harris, in a recent post on Instagram. "And it just can't be allowed to continue."

The goal is to give kids time to ease into the digital future rather than drown in it, said Rachel Harper, the principal of St. Patrick's National School, who spearheaded the initiative. "This is the world the children are growing up in, and we need to equip them," she said.

"It Takes a Village" was conceived as students returned to school after Covid-19 lockdowns. Harper was struck by how many tears she was seeing at the school gates. She heard similar reports from other primary school principals, teachers and parents: children struggling to sleep,

'It takes a village' to free children from phones



A grocery on Church Road, a main drive lined with shops where teens and tweens are often seen socialising, in Greystones, Ireland. The seaside town of Greystones, just south of Dublin, launched a grass-roots initiative in 2023 to loosen the grip of technology on their pre-teen children by adopting a voluntary 'no smart devices' code and supporting it with workshops and social events. (Right) Bodie Mangan Gisleir, 12, prefers collecting coins to scrolling on a phone (for the time being). NYT

refusing to come to school, downloading calorie-counting apps, or too upset by messages sent the night before to focus in class. "If we didn't take a stand now," she said, "in five years would they be getting phones at 5 or 6?"

Eoghan Cleary, a teacher and assistant principal at Greystones' Temple Carrig secondary school, had also sounded the alarm. "I wish I didn't have to see any more beheadings" — that's what my students say to me the most," he said. "I don't want to see people being killed. I don't want to see people being raped online."

After some 800 parents responded to a survey sent out by the primary schools — more than half said their children were anxious, and many had sought mental-health assistance — the town decided it was time to act.

"I think it was just so obvious, the damage phones were causing," said one resident, Ross McParland, who first heard about the schools' concerns over dinner at Harper's house. McParland, a retired real estate consultant, turned to the Greystones Town Team. Usually responsible for things like Christmas decorations and the St Patrick's Day parade, Town Team volunteers were soon focused on the anti-anxiety project.

To kick off the project, McParland hosted a town hall in the Whale Theatre, which he owned. Harris spoke, as did Stephen

Donnelly, then the Irish minister of health and another Greystones father. Two weeks later, all eight primary school principals signed a letter to parents in support of a voluntary code being rolled out by the PTAs. Parents could agree not to buy their kids a smart device before secondary school, which most children start at around age 12. Seventy percent of parents signed up, and the community united behind the cause.

The founder of a local film festival handled communications, Garrett Harte, a former editor-in-chief of *Newstalk*, Ireland's nationwide talk-radio station, helped hone the initiative's message and delivery. "This was very much, 'our town needs a little bit of help navigating this new world adults have no clue about,'" Harte said.

Within a few months, Donnelly had established a national Online Health Taskforce, while Ireland's Department of Education issued guidelines for other primary-school communities that wished to follow Greystones' model.

These days, Greystones parents still face the familiar torrent of technology delivered to kids who know how to change their birth date by a few years to evade

age restrictions. According to a 2025 study by CyberSafeKids, an online-safety group, 28% of Irish children between the ages of 8 and 12 experienced content or unsolicited contact that "bothered" them, including exposure to horror, violence, sexual material and threats; 63% of primary school-aged children said their parents couldn't see what they're doing online.

But with workshops for adults and children, podcasts on the topic (like one hosted by local twins Stephen and David Flynn, Greystones dads and lifestyle influencers), and events like a phone-free beach party, Greystones has seen a shift: Parents say the pressure to get their kids a smartphone before the end of primary school has all but vanished. Some say they feel less alone navigating new technological shoals. At St Patrick's, one teacher said her students were more alert in the mornings.

Harper said that children are making plans in person, playing outdoors more, and "just being kids."

Interest is on the rise. Cleary, the assistant principal, hosts weekly parent talks, often in communities that want to follow in Greystones' footsteps. On a recent rainy night at a primary school in Dublin, the audience of about 100 groaned as he described how violent pornography had shaped his teenage students' ideas about sexuality, and how some tech companies were telling soon-to-be 13-year-olds how to bypass parental controls.

Speaking from a decade of experience, Cleary urged the parents to set limits on screen time and lobby elected officials to demand stronger technology legislation. Rather than instituting bans, he hopes to see these technologies made safer for children.

The New York Times

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The New York Times



Rachel Harper, principal of St. Patrick's National School, spearheaded the 'It Takes a Village' programme. NYT

Grey zones in classroom conflicts

ARUNA PARANDHAMA

The recent flurry of social media comments on two incidents in Bengaluru's universities has prompted the usual indignation, both within and beyond academia. One involved a professor proposing to a student in the classroom; the other, a visiting professor who reportedly used a communal slur to refer to a student. Both are indiscretions that warrant institutional action. However, the speed with which public opinion has crystallised around the events also points to something else: a growing inability to handle complexity where it is needed.

The response has largely been "name, shame, move on". But appearances can be deceptive. In the case of the proposal, the professor was reportedly punched by multiple students. While the original action may constitute professional misconduct, the retribution cannot be justified. In a democratic society, can citizens—especially students—take matters into their own hands? Indignation, however understandable, cannot be justified.

Technology, too, is a factor. In the second instance, students recorded a video of the professor. The profanity in the professor's comments does not justify their circulation. Privacy and consent are not optional. The presence of recording devices in classrooms, and the speed at which such content is shared, point to a surveillance society at odds with the idea of the classroom as a pedagogically safe space.

Let us also consider the question of context. Viral videos rarely present a complete picture. They are fragments—edited, condensed and often decontextualised. In a digital culture that rewards speed, such fragments are treated as evidence. What follows is a form of trial by media, where reputations are made or destroyed within hours, often without institutional intervention. Institutions themselves have not been exemplary in such crises. Their responses—suspensions, apologies, and statements—signal responsiveness but not necessarily fairness. Are review procedures in place? Is there an effort to understand the incident in full? A response can appear reactive when it is made public.

More generally, these incidents point to a cultural change within classrooms. Established customs and norms governing student-teacher interactions are being disrupted. Reports of students recording lecturers, taking pictures or videos, or causing mischief for fun are becoming more frequent. In-

structors are often left to manage these behaviours alone. This results in unequal regulation of one party and not the other, breeding unease and, at times, antagonism.

At present, regulation is only partially effective and skewed. The University Grants Commission (UGC) mandates the formation of anti-ragging committees and redressals. Accreditation bodies, such as NAAC, emphasise ethical compliance and institutional accountability. These mostly deal with staff misconduct. There is less attention to clarifying student expectations in the areas of online behaviour, consent and nonviolent grievance redressal. This should be no longer acceptable. To create a learning environment, behaviour standards must be set for all stakeholders. Students must be trained in dealing with conflict, discomfort and injustice, rather than strike when they feel the unwarranted urge to do so. This means understanding the limits of acceptable behaviour, on and off the internet.

Social media makes these problems worse. It assigns privilege to short-form communication and to going "viral". It negates the time-intensive process of learning. We are being conditioned as consumers of these media to react to half-truths, to rapidly align ourselves with stories that feed our prejudices. When this environment is imported into the classroom, it is contrary to the purpose of higher education, which is to foster critical judgment.

The solution is not to take sides but to re-establish equilibrium. Universities must not focus on firefighting; they need to build their defences: codes of conduct, sensitisation workshops, and avenues for redressal. Similarly, there must be an understanding that teachers and students can be both authoritative and accountable; they work within certain moral boundaries.

Ignoring these grey areas will have far-reaching consequences. The classroom may cease to exist as a physical space for debate and critical thinking. We may become a reactive society that falls back on virtual or AI-driven education. The idea of mentoring students in person may lose credibility. To reclaim the classrooms of higher education institutions (HEIs), we must not only address the issue of misconduct but also recover the conditions of education: deliberation, moderation and rational judgment.

(The writer is an assistant professor in the Department of English, St. Joseph's College of Commerce [Autonomous], Bengaluru)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: MARCH 1976

Maharashtra's radical Bill to curb population growth

Bombay, March 30
A radical Bill, which provides for compulsory sterilisation of persons under which one million operations will be performed in 1976-77, was introduced in the Maharashtra Assembly today. The Bill prescribes compulsory sterilisation of males who have not completed 55 years and women who have not completed 45 and who have the "prescribed number of living children," which will be determined periodically by the State Government through the gazette.

25 YEARS AGO: MARCH 2001

Rs 843-cr scam in banks sends bourses tumbling

New Delhi, March 30
In yet another "Black Friday" blood-bath, stock markets all over the country witnessed sharp downward movements with the Sensex of the BSE crashing by 147 points in the wake of reports of a Rs 843-crore bank scam allegedly involving leading bull operator Ketan Parekh. A similar trend was also noticed on the NSE where the NIFTY index fell by 3.91 per cent during the day. Mr Parekh and his associates were allegedly involved in circular trading of shares causing their sharp fall.

Greater than the hero: The grace of devotion

We often hear about fanatic fans who give up their lives to see or be with or for their idol. Many a time, these earnest hero worshippers end up being heroes because of their genuine attachment and involvement with their favourite person or a cause.

The *Krithivasa Ramayana* introduces one such interesting episode in the Bengali version of the epic. Taranisen, the son of Vibhishana, was a great devotee of Rama. His entire body was tattooed with the name of his *ishta devata*. He spent all his waking hours meditating on Rama or by chanting his name. When Ravana abducted Sita,

Vibhishana beseeched him to return Sita to her husband. But Ravana was not the one to relent. Then, Vibhishana chose to secede from Lanka with a heavy heart and joined the enemy camp. However, Taranisen, the patriot, chose to stay back in his motherland. Soon a war was waged between the armies of Rama and Ravana. A few days into the war, Ravana summoned Taranisen to fight Rama.

Rama was taken aback with his devotion and wondered how he could



ever pierce through the fortress that encapsulated his name. At that point in time, Vibhishana called Rama aside and told him that the mouth of Taranisen was his weak spot because he had not etched the name of Rama on his teeth and tongue. But Rama said that would be of no use because Taranisen was chanting the name of Rama constantly. So, Vibhishana suggested that arrows should be shot into the oral cavity of Taranisen between the brief interval of two chants. The Ikshvaku used this brief window to bring

down Taranisen, and immediately his eyes were flooded with tears. He noticed that Vibhishana was also in tears. It was then that Rama wanted to know whether Taranisen was Ravana's son, to which Vibhishana haltingly replied that Taranisen was his own son.

The exiled prince was astounded by the father-son duo who had expressed their unflinching devotion to him in such a dramatic way. Thus, Vibhishana and Taranisen displayed staunch selflessness, courage and unadulterated veneration towards Rama and gained greater glory than their God!

AP: Top Maoist leader surrenders

HYDERABAD, DHNS: Senior Maoist leader Chelluri Narayana Rao, alias Suresh, a Central Committee Member (CCM) and Secretary of the Andhra Odisha Border Special Zonal Committee (AOBSZC), surrendered before Andhra Pradesh DGP Harish Kumar Gupta on Monday along with eight other cadres, including members of the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA).

Anative of Vajrapu Kothuru in Srikakulam, Narayana Rao spent about 36 years in the CPI (Maoist) organisation across various ranks. He is believed to have masterminded the 2018 killings of then TDP MLA Kidari Sarveswara Rao and former MLA Siveri Someswara Rao. He also took part in several ambushes and armed raids, including those at Neelabhadra, Koraput, Kurneru Railway Station and Nayagarh, in which police personnel were killed and large quantities of weapons were looted.

Monday's surrender of Narayana Rao further strengthens what security forces describe as a near-complete clearance of senior Naxal presence from the region.

LeT handler Shabir Ahmed Lone held in New Delhi

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Special Cell of Delhi Police has arrested suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) handler Shabir Ahmed Lone from the Ghazipur area here, officials said on Monday.

He was then produced before a court, which sent him to five days of police custody.

Terming Lone a "hard-core and highly trained terrorist", the police said he reportedly set up links with handlers operating on behalf of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

"Lone, alias Raja and Kashmiri, is a resident of Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar and was operating as the handler of a recently busted module involved in pasting anti-national posters across multiple locations in Delhi and Kolkata," said a senior police officer.

According to the officer, a team from the New Delhi Range of the Special Cell arrested Lone on March 29 in connection with the LeT module unearthed in the metro poster case on February 22.

"The police recovered multiple foreign currencies and other incriminating material from his possession," they said. A Nepalese SIM card was also seized, raising suspicions about cross-border communication and operational coordination.

India is almost free of Naxalism, Shah tells Lok Sabha

Blames Cong for long spell of Left-wing violence in country

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Emphasising that one could now say that India is free of Naxalism, Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday blamed the Congress for the long spell of Left wing violence in the country and attacked its top leader Rahul Gandhi, alleging that he too has become a Naxal due to his proximity with Maoists and that people will have to respond to him through elections.

Replying to a short-duration discussion on 'Efforts to Free the Country from Left Wing Extremism' in Lok Sabha, he also claimed that Indira Gand-

hi's tussle for power within Congress during the 1969 Presidential election, during which she got the support of the Left parties, led her to fall into a "firm grip of Maoists".

In remarks a day before the March 31 deadline to eliminate Naxalism, he said under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, several efforts were taken to free the country from the menace and he can "now say that Naxalism has been eliminated" after 20 of the 21 CPI (Maoist) Central Committee or Polit Bureau members either surrendered, arrested or got killed while talks are on with another who is on the run.

Accusing Congress of doing



A former Naxal works on a sewing machine at Dantewada district's rehabilitation centre in Chhattisgarh's Bastar division on Monday. AFP

nothing during its rule to tackle Naxalism, he said Maoists are almost eradicated now from Bastar in Chhattisgarh. He said power remained with the Congress for 60 of the 75 years but tribals remained deprived of development to this day, and it is only with the arrival of Modi that actual development is taking place.

"The root cause of Naxalism is not the demand for develop-

ment. It is an ideology that Indira ji embraced back in 1970 in order to win the presidential election. Naxalism has spread precisely because of this Leftist ideology," he alleged.

Targeting Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul, he said the Congress leader was seen multiple times with Naxals in his long political career, including during his Bharat Jodo Yatra in which several

frontal Naxal organisations participated and his meeting with Gaddar whose ideology is closely aligned with Naxalism.

"When Naxal operative Hidma was killed, slogans were raised at India Gate that if one Hidma is killed, Hidma will arise from every house. A video of this was tweeted by Rahul Gandhi. From 1970 to March 2026, they supported Naxals. 20,000 people were killed because of Congress' Left ideology. The people of this country will have to respond to this in elections," he said.

Emphasising that the Modi government will not tolerate any kind of violence and take strong action against anyone indulging in such acts, he said development in Naxal-infested Bastar was stalled because the shadow of red terror loomed there. "Now this shadow is lifting, and Bastar is developing," he said, adding that the Modi government will not spare anyone who picks up arms.

Fast-track court starts hearing of Zubeen Garg case

Political row grows over issue ahead of Assembly polls

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

The fast-track court constituted for daily trial into the case of the alleged murder of cultural icon Zubeen Garg began its hearing here on Monday amid growing politics over the issue ahead of the April 9 Assembly elections.

The hearing began in the court of judge Sharmila Bhuyan, following which the accused — Shyamkanu Mahanta, Shidarth Sharma, Shekhar Jyoti Goswami, Amritprabha Mahanta, Sandipan Garg, Nandeswar Borah, and Paresh Baishya — were connected with the court through video-conferencing from the district jails of Baksa and Hailong.

The accused were arrested soon after Garg died while swimming in a sea in Singapore on September 19 last year. Garg was in Singapore as a cultural ambassador, taking part in the Northeast India Festival organised by Shyamkanu, an entrepreneur.

During the hearing, Am-

ritprabha Mahanta's counsel A K Bhuyan placed his arguments seeking her discharge from the case. The lawyer is expected to continue the arguments on Tuesday.

Amritprabha, a female singer and Garg's band mate, was with the iconic singer during the incident.

The Gauhati High Court recently constituted the fast-track court based on an Assam government plea, which itself was based on the growing demand for justice in the case. Sarma had earlier claimed that Garg was murdered by one accused and was assisted by the others.

A coroner in Singapore recently ruled that Garg's death was caused by drowning, and that he was inebriated at the time of the incident.

The Opposition parties, however, alleged that Sarma was playing politics by facilitating the fast-track court just before the Assembly elections.

Sarma, on the other hand, said that justice would be delivered by the court, not by him or the BJP.

On Sunday, the issue figured in the five "guarantees" the Congress made ahead of the Assembly elections. The party promised to provide justice in the case within 100 days of the formation of its government after the polls.



Zubeen Garg



People wait in a queue with empty LPG gas cylinders to avail the refilled ones amid the ongoing supply distribution, in Navi Mumbai, on Monday. PTI

LPG crisis: Centre allocates PDS kerosene to states

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Due to constrained LPG supplies caused by the ongoing West Asia conflict, the Central government has made an ad hoc allocation of Public Distribution System (PDS) kerosene to states and Union Territories (UTs) for household use.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas issued a notification on Sunday, granting temporary exemptions under the Petroleum Act, 1934, and Petroleum Rules, 2002. The order, which came into immediate effect, will remain valid for 60 days or until further orders.

As per the notification, up to two designated PSU oil marketing company (OMC) service stations per district — preferably company-owned — will be allowed to store up to 5,000 litres of kerosene, subject to

RAJESH KUMAR SINHA
Special Secretary

“Our first priority is to get Indian flagged vessels out. We are yet to reach the stage where we start sending back vessels (for refills).”

safety norms.

Agents and dealers have been exempted from obtaining fresh licences for decanting kerosene at these stations, and existing tank vehicles will not require additional permits.

19 ships stranded

Meanwhile, 19 ships carrying LPG, crude oil, and LNG destined for India are currently stranded in the Strait of Hormuz due to the escalating conflict. They include three LPG vessels, four crude-oil tankers, and three LNG carriers. So far, eight Indian-flagged vessels

have sailed out safely.

In a related development, the conflict has caused a 60% surge in natural gas feedstock prices for fertiliser plants, significantly increasing the government's subsidy burden.

Natural gas supply to fertiliser units has been restricted to 80% of demand, forcing companies to purchase costly LNG from the spot market.

Department of Fertilisers Joint Secretary Aparna S Sharma said the country had adequate stocks of fertilisers to meet demand for the upcoming Kharif season. "The prevailing situation is vulnerable, but we have dealt with it strategically," she said.

The Gulf region, which normally supplies 20-30% of India's urea, around 30% of DAP, and nearly 50% of LNG requirements, remains severely impacted, leading to higher input costs and freight charges.

Govt lists foreign fund law amendment for passage

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Amid protests from the Opposition and minority communities, the government has listed the passage of the contentious Bill to amend foreign fund laws in Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

According to the Revised List of Business of Lok Sabha for April 1, the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026 has been listed for passage after the House clears The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill 2026.

Wednesday will be the second last day of the Budget Session, though there have been reports that the government may not prorogue the Session and reconvene Parliament after the conclusion of the Assembly elections.

The Bill proposes to take over any asset created using foreign funds if an entity allowed to collect such donations gets their licence cancelled, ceased or suspended. The assets in such cases are vested in a "designated authority" permanently if the entities fail to renew their licence within a specified time.

The Bill has attracted criticism from Opposition parties, including the Congress, CPM, CPI and Samajwadi Party, as well as the Catholic Bishops Council of India (CBCI), accusing the government of

RAHUL GANDHI
Leader of the Opposition in LS



Suddenly, we noticed that an FCRA Bill had been brought in. The interesting thing is that there is only one organisation that can receive money from abroad. No other organisation can receive money from abroad except the RSS.

PINARAYI VIJAYAN
Kerala CM



The apprehension is that granting such sweeping powers to authorities could lead to arbitrary exercise, and such concerns cannot be dismissed as baseless.

further stifling civil society.

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi raised the issue during a campaign meeting in Kerala on Monday, while CPM general secretary MA Baby and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan have shot off separate letters to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking its withdrawal.

Telangana Assembly refers hate speech bill to select panel

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD DHNS

The Telangana Assembly on Monday referred the Telangana Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill, 2026 to a select committee, following objections from the BRS and BJP and suggestions from the AIMIM.

The bill prescribes a jail term of up to 10 years and a fine of Rs 1 lakh. Offences under the legislation will be cognisable and non-bailable. As defined in the Bill, hate speech encompasses any expression spoken or written, conveyed through signs, visible representations, or electronic communication made with the intention of causing injury, disharmony, enmity, hatred, or ill-will against any person, living or deceased, or against any class, group, or community.

The bill was moved by Transport Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar, who said the proposed legislation was aimed at addressing the growing menace of hate speech and targeted violence, particularly in the age of social media, while ensuring protection for vulnerable communities.

Around 14 members from the Congress, BJP, AIMIM, and CPI participated in the discussion. Some members, including the Congress, wanted the bill to be referred to a

'HATE' BILL

■ Bill aims at addressing the growing menace of hate speech, targeted violence

■ Offences under the legislation will be cognisable and non-bailable.

■ Bill also seeks to punish organisations or institutions for hate crimes

■ KT Rama Rao calls the bill a draconian tool to curb free speech

Select Committee, while BJP members demanded that it be withdrawn.

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao condemned the bill, calling it a draconian tool to curb free speech. He raised serious constitutional, democratic, and civil liberties concerns if the bill becomes law. "While preventing genuine hate speech and maintaining social harmony is an important responsibility of government, the present framework appears dangerously broad, vague, and open to misuse," he said.

AIMIM's Ahmed Bin Balala supported the bill but pointed out certain shortcomings. He said propagation of religion should not be misconstrued as hate speech and suggested that the bill be sent to a select panel for wider consultations.

Nitish resigns as MLC after Rajya Sabha election

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

Putting all speculation to rest, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar resigned as a Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) on Monday.

The constitutional provision requires a member to resign from the House within 14 days of being elected to Parliament. Nitish was elected to the Rajya Sabha on March 16.

Nitish will, however, continue as chief minister until he takes his oath as a Rajya Sabha member in the second week of April. Legally, he can remain Bihar CM even after being sworn in as a Rajya Sabha member, but Nitish is a stickler for rules and known to uphold constitutional values.

"Nitish ji will quit as CM around April 13, and a new chief minister from the BJP will take oath after April 14, once the Kharmas (inauspicious period) is over," a senior ruling party member told DH.

Nabin resigns as MLA

Meanwhile, BJP national president Nitin Nabin, who was also elected to the Rajya Sabha on March 16, resigned

as a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) on Monday. Nabin has represented Bankipur in Patna as MLA since 2006.

Tejashwi slams BJP

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav, attacked the BJP for "cheating" Bihar's voters.

"It's a great betrayal of the people who voted for the NDA in Nitish's name. The BJP had its own game plan — just like in Maharashtra, where it showed Eknath Shinde his place. From the beginning, we asserted that the BJP is not trustworthy and would not allow Nitish to remain Bihar CM after the elections," Tejashwi said.

Poll strategist-turned-politician Prashant Kishor also assailed the BJP. "Nitish promised Bihar's youth one crore jobs and Rs 2 lakh each for women entrepreneurs. Now who will answer to the voters who backed him en bloc?" said Kishor, whose outfit Jan Suraj failed to win a single seat in the November 2025 Assembly polls.



Nitish Kumar

LOCAL BLOOM

Kashmir research hub set to grow India's tulip supply

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

In a major step towards self-reliance in floriculture, a research centre in south Kashmir is preparing to supply locally grown tulip bulbs and seeds to major gardens across India, significantly reducing the country's dependence on costly imports.

The Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir is developing the Centre of Excellence for Tulips at Kokernag in Anantnag district, spearheading efforts to promote indigenous tulip production. The initiative aims to make high-quality planting material available within the country and position tulip cultivation as a viable economic alternative for farmers in Kashmir and beyond.

India currently imports tulip bulbs worth an estimated Rs 300-400 crore annually, with nearly 90% sourced from the Netherlands. Officials say the new centre is expected to gradually bring down this import bill by ensuring a steady domestic supply.

"At present, most tulip bulbs are imported from foreign markets, but this centre is expected to ensure local availability in the coming years," said Prof Muhammad Ayoub Mantoo, Head of the Mountain Crop Research Station, highlighting the long-term goal of self-sufficiency.

Spread over 407 kanals and supported by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development with an outlay of Rs 80 million, the project focuses on breeding, production, and multiplication of



Tulips at the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden in Srinagar. PTI

tulip bulbs suited to Kashmir's temperate climate. Scientists at the centre have been working to improve bulb quality, size, and propagation rates to meet commercial requirements.

Assistant Professor Muneeb, associated with the project, explained the technical aspects of cultivation. "A bulb size of 10 to 12 cm is ideal for flowering. Anything smaller results in vegetative growth," he said, adding, "It takes two to three years to reach flowering size."

Officials believe that scaling up tulip cultivation could have a transformative impact on the region's horticulture economy. "Once farmers adopt this crop, it can boost the economy, offer better returns than apples, and reduce dependence on imports," Muneeb said.

Beyond economic gains, the initiative is also expected to generate employment for local youth in bulb production, storage, packaging, and marketing. "Sustained efforts are being made to minimise imports in the coming years," said scientist Muhammad Ashraf, pointing to the broader objective of strengthening domestic supply chains.

'OBC inclusion offers no real benefit': Raj HC grants 3% weightage to transgenders

JODHPUR, PTI

In a significant ruling on affirmative action for transgender persons, the Rajasthan High Court's Jodhpur bench has held that the state's policy of including them under the OBC category offers no meaningful benefit and granted interim relief, directing a 3% additional marks weightage in recruitment and admissions.

A Division Bench of Justices Arun Monga and Yogendra Kumar Purohit passed the order while disposing of a writ petition filed by Ganga Kumari, who had challenged a January 12, 2023, state government notification.

In its order pronounced on Monday, the bench directed the state to constitute a high-level committee to undertake a detailed study on the socio-economic marginalisation of transgender persons across categories and recommend a suitable reservation framework. The government has been asked to take a policy decision based on the committee's findings.

Ganga Kumari had sought quashing of the 2023 notification and a direction to provide horizontal reservation in pub-

NO QUOTA GAIN

■ Plea in HC against govt move claims inclusion within OBC list without separate quota renders benefit for transgenders ineffective, and at times even detrimental

■ Counsel for petitioner says transgender individuals belonging to SC/ST or other backward categories forced into disadvantageous choice

■ They have to either retain caste-based reservation or opt for the transgender category, says counsel

lic employment and education, relying on the Supreme Court's mandate recognising transgender persons as a distinct class entitled to affirmative action.

She argued that inclusion within the OBC list without a separate quota rendered the benefit ineffective and, in some cases, detrimental.

Her counsel contended that transgender individuals belonging to SC/ST or other backward categories were

forced into a disadvantageous choice — either retain their caste-based reservation or opt for the transgender category — without any additional benefit. It was also pointed out that the policy had not benefited any transgender person since its introduction.

The state opposed the plea, maintaining that reservation structuring falls within the executive's domain and that transgender persons were already covered under the OBC reservation, along with welfare schemes and skill development initiatives.

After examining the material, the court found merit in the petitioner's grievance, observing that the impugned notification was "an exercise in form without substance" and failed to translate constitutional guarantees into meaningful outcomes. It noted that the state's own affidavit confirmed the absence of any tangible benefit to the community.

The bench also highlighted the anomaly whereby transgender persons from SC/ST backgrounds could lose more advantageous reservation benefits due to their blanket categorisation under OBC.

Lawsuits being used to delay proceedings, harass rivals: Supreme Court

Says judicial process meant to resolve genuine disputes, not facilitate frivolous claims

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has said that the increasing influx of litigation appears to be driven less by a pursuit of justice and more by an attempt to delay proceedings, harass opponents, and consume valuable judicial time. The top court emphasised that the judicial process was designed to resolve genuine disputes and not facilitate repetitive or frivolous claims. A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Augustine George Masih said, "Parties who initiate or persist in vexatious or frivolous proceedings must remain mindful that such conduct risks facing judicial disapproval and may warrant appropriate orders, including dismissal with costs."

The court also emphasised that once a dispute relating to a particular cause had been brought before a competent court, the party could not be allowed to raise it in another proceeding or at a later stage. It said the rule protected parties from being subjected to multiple proceedings on the same cause. In its March 25 judgment, the court dismissed a civil appeal by Sharada Sanghi and others against the Andhra Pradesh High Court's October 21, 2010, judgment that affirmed the judgment and decree of the first appellate court of January 17, 2007, on the northern portion of an immovable property in Hyderabad. The bench, however, expressed its inability to concur with the appellate court's reasoning, affirmed by the HC, that dismissal of a suit for default would, by itself, operate as res judicata — meaning, a matter adjudicated by a competent court may not be pursued further by the same parties — within the meaning of Section 11 of the Civil Procedure Code to bar adjudication of proceedings initiated by the appellants for execution. The apex court also pointed out that the conduct of the appellants in abandoning the earlier suits, after having raised a positive case therein, attracted the broader principles akin to "nemo debet bis vexari, si constet curiae quod sit pro una et eadem causa (Rough translation: No one should be tried twice if it appears to the court that it is for the same cause)". The court also referred to Order XXIII Rule 1, CPC where the underlying principle was that when a plaintiff once institutes a suit in a court, he cannot be permitted to institute a fresh suit in respect of the same subject.

Modi to launch projects worth over Rs 19 cr in Gujarat today

AHMEDABAD, DHNS: On a one-day visit to Gujarat on Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will open the Samrat Sampatu Museum in Gandhinagar, a semiconductor facility in Sanand, and will also lay the groundwork for several projects in the newly established Vav-Tharad district. The prime minister is scheduled to address public gatherings at all these places. The visit comes ahead of preparations for crucial local body polls. It will be his second visit to the home state in the past three months. According to the state government, the prime minister would inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth over Rs 19,800 crore.

The state government said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will conduct housewarming ceremonies (Ghar Pravesh) for 38,949 homes in 34 districts as part of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin), assisting beneficiaries in achieving their dream of owning a home. The PM is also scheduled to inaugurate the Samrat Samprati Museum in Gandhinagar. The museum is dedicated to the historical, cultural and spiritual legacy of Jainism. Modi will also be inaugurating a semiconductor plant in Sanand. The dates for polls in 15 municipal corporations, 84 municipalities, 34 district panchayats, and 260 taluka panchayats are likely to be announced in first week of April.

Andhra shocker: Navy staffer kills woman, dismembers body

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

In a chilling incident, a civilian employee of the Indian Navy in Andhra Pradesh's Gajuwaka area allegedly killed a woman, cut her body into pieces and stored the remains in bags inside a refrigerator before surrendering to police. When officers brought him to his apartment for scene reconstruction on Monday afternoon, the victim's relatives attempted to attack him. According to sources in Gajuwaka police, Chintada Ravindra (35), a Navy technician, lived in an apartment in LV Nagar near Gajuwaka in Visakhapatnam. His wife had left for her parents' home in Vizianagaram a month earlier for childbirth. On Sunday, Ravindra invited Mounika (29), a public sector bank employee in Visakhapatnam whom he had known earlier, to his residence. She arrived at his flat, and the two spoke briefly before a heated argument broke out. Ravindra allegedly stabbed Mounika and later dismembered the body, placing the remains in bags and storing them in a refrigerator. He later walked into the nearest police station, recounted the incident and surrendered. Ravindra told police that Mounika had repeatedly harassed him for money and that he committed the murder as he could no longer endure the pressure. Investigators found that

other accused in the case were in touch with Kejriwal for formulating the now-scrapped excise policy that resulted in undue benefits to them and kickbacks to the Aam Aadmi Party. Kejriwal is presently on interim bail in the money laundering case, with the Supreme

Ravindra and Mounika had first connected through a dating app during the Covid-19 lockdown in 2020. Ravindra told police he had paid her Rs 3.50 lakh over time, but she continued to demand more money. Police said Mounika arrived at Keerti Apartments in LV Nagar around 1 pm on Sunday, after which an argument led to the killing. Investigators also found that Ravindra had purchased knives earlier in Gajuwaka, suggesting possible premeditation. After the crime, he allegedly cleaned the flat and later called a friend, who advised him to surrender. Mounika's father, Venugopal, demanded an impartial inquiry and justice for his daughter.

ED moves Delhi High Court, challenges Kejriwal's acquittal in summons case

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Enforcement Directorate on Monday moved the Delhi High Court, challenging the acquittal of former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal in two separate cases lodged against him for not appearing before the agency despite summonses issued in the excise policy case.

The ED's appeal against the trial court's January 22 orders is listed for hearing before Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma on Wednesday. The agency alleged that the then chief minister intentionally omitted to obey them by not responding to summonses and did not attend the probe.

It also alleged Kejriwal raised frivolous objections and deliberately created grounds for not attending the probe. In its decision, the trial court said that ED failed to prove that Kejriwal intentionally disobeyed the summonses issued to him. The ED has alleged that the

Court referring questions on the aspect of the "need and necessity of arrest" under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to a larger bench for an in-depth consideration. On February 27, the trial court discharged Kejriwal, Sisodia and 21 others in the liquor policy case.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



Hagar The Horrible



Peanuts



JUMBLE

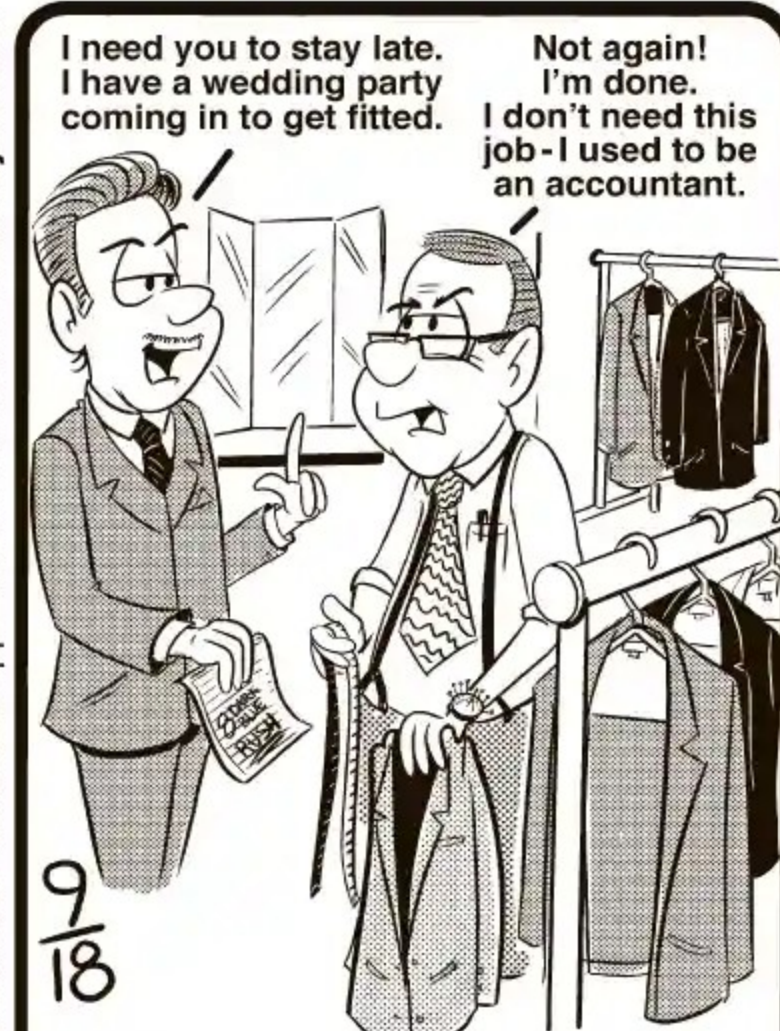
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SUDEO
URTIF
MGBTIA
SIFNHI

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



I need you to stay late. I have a wedding party coming in to get fitted. Not again! I'm done. I don't need this job—I used to be an accountant.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: DINKY SWEPT EMERGE COMMON
Answer: When it came to teaching his cooking students how to chop, the chef didn't — MINCE WORDS

◆ SU-DO-KU-6867 ◆

		6	2	7	8		1
1		2		6			
3						6	
5	1	3			4	7	
	2	4			3	8	5
	9						3
6		1	5		4	9	

5	9	6	4	1	3	8	2	7
7	1	4	2	8	5	3	9	6
3	8	2	7	9	6	1	4	5
2	6	9	8	7	1	4	5	3
8	3	7	9	5	4	6	1	2
4	5	1	3	6	2	9	7	8
1	4	8	5	3	7	2	6	9
6	7	3	1	2	9	5	8	4
9	2	5	6	4	8	7	3	1

SOLUTION TO 6866

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

HITORI-3321

2	1	4	1	5	2	7	7
4	2	4	3	1	6	7	1
5	3	8	2	4	7	6	2
1	4	3	2	6	1	2	4
3	8	7	4	3	1	1	2
8	4	5	7	2	3	1	1
2	7	1	1	2	5	8	3
2	5	1	3	7	2	3	1

SOLUTION TO 3320

1	4	2	7	5	8
3	2	1	6	5	5
6	5	8	3	7	4
7	3	5	2	8	4
2	5	1	6	3	4
4	3	6	2	1	6
1	6	7	4	5	8
8	6	4	5	7	2

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3321

6	9	15	41	22	28	10	12
4		17				5	
29		10				18	
18	14	13	3		15		6
16			23	9		6	
24	20	4		11	19	6	20
15			8		14		17
16						4	

SOLUTION TO 3320

6	23	12	11	25	19	27	21
1	6	1	1	2	5	6	9
14	2	9	4	3	9	8	7
13	3	7	8	9	2	9	8
11	1	2	2	3	6	5	
14	1	3	6	2	9	17	
13	9	2	1	2	4	12	4
14	5	1	3	9	15	5	3
12	7	1	7	5	8	9	
13	9	4	16	2	1	6	13
13	3	1	7	5	13	3	6
11	2	9				11	9

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3871

					6	4
		7		9		
			5			9
					2	1
4	8				5	
5			2		8	
		7	6			
3		9			7	6
	2			9		

SOLUTION TO 3870

3	4	9	6	8	5	7	1	2
1	7	5	9	4	2	6	3	8
8	2	6	3	1	7	4	5	9
4	3	8	2	7	6	1	9	5
6	5	2	1	9	4	8	7	3
9	1	7	5	3	8	2	6	4
2	9	1	4	6	3	5	8	7
5	8	3	7	2	1	9	4	6
7	6	4	8	5	9	3	2	1

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12384

1	2		3	4		5	6	7		8
10								11		
13	14							15		16
17										
20	21							22		23
24								25		
								26		
27										28
								29		
30										31

- ACROSS
1 Behave smugly (5)
6 Musical instrument (5)
9 Obstruction (7)
10 Hold up (5)
11 Circular (5)
12 Defeats (5)
13 Facetious (7)
15 Insect (3)
17 Night birds (4)
18 Turn aside (6)
19 Senior member (5)
20 Insight (6)
22 Male voice (4)
24 Opposite of cold (3)
25 Straw hats (7)
26 Group of nine (5)
27 Couches (5)
28 Private teacher (5)
29 One thousand million (7)
30 Raising agent (5)
31 Nuisances (5)
- DOWN
2 Keep quiet or unseen (3,3)
3 Counting frame (6)
4 Scottish river (3)
5 Command (5)
6 Sure (7)
7 Cupid (4)
8 Delay, loiter (6)
12 Pigmeat (5)
13 Jinx (5)
14 Influence (5)
15 Beautiful girl (5)
16 Distinctive character (5)
18 Warehouse (5)
19 Down payment (7)
21 Prairie wolf (6)
22 Adjust, accustom (6)
23 Test (3,3)
25 Stomach (5)
26 Arrests (4)
28 Summit (3)

CRYPTIC

- ACROSS
1 More than a little, we gather (5)
6 Burns or rases, possibly (5)
9 Officer and politician work in agreement (7)
10 Half an hour getting dry out in the lane (5)
11 Like a poor golfer's luck? (5)
12 Of his works, were many in wrought iron? (5)
13 Bloomer by Albert, a novel sleuth (7)
15 Smart joint? (3)
17 Neglect to return from Baltimore (4)
18 She could give a sneer (6)
19 Shortage of nice guys (5)
20 Prevented from being a drifter (6)
22 Beaten hollow (4)
24 Where Ray went wrong (3)
25 One drawn to serve apprenticeship? (7)
26 Encouragement to listen to Beethoven's fourth (5)
27 One mounted with saintly mien? (5)
28 Projected productions (5)
29 Guy is light, having nothing on! (7)
30 Funny feature of bread rolls (5)
31 Would a miser pinch her? (5)
- DOWN
2 Can such grass make one sheep turn on another? (6)
3 It can be ignored ad lib (6)
4 Such sauce seems soppy but not very soft (3)
5 A racy egg container (5)
6 Writers using a concealed crib (7)
7 The very opposite of Windsor? (4)
8 Recover, for instance, in wet weather (6)
12 How oarsman fell out? (5)
13 It gives one pause (5)
14 Small, but maybe of some prominence? (5)
15 Female embracing me for want of butch types? (2-3)
16 Stick to good glass (5)
18 Initial advantage to a flier, perhaps? (5)
19 He can order everybody about (7)
21 May come out of bed to rebuild a storey (6)
22 To dine out with a girl is heavenly (6)
23 Replacement cardinal? (6)
25 Catches an unwary sprat? (5)
26 To climb it is hard, being sick (4)
28 Dandy maybe, but a failure without money (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12383

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 3, Chits 8, Get-up 10, Harpy 11, Ta-M 12, S-Eve-N 13, Cob-bled 15, Stars 18, Roc 19, Wealth 21, De-B-tors 22, Pool 23, Fail 24, Moisten 26, Ch-Op-in 29, Tom 31, K-ar-en 32, Get-able 34, Lu-CID 35, Lie 36, Scott 37, Metal 38, Seats.
DOWN: 1, L-et-on 2, Tumble 4, He-ed 5, Theses 6, Santa 7, Sport 9, Tab 12, Section 14, Lob 16, Al-ban 17, She-LL 19, Wrested 20, S-peck 21, Do-n-or 23, Fe-males 24, Minute 25, To-t 27, Hatch 28, Pelts 30, Bleak 32, Gl-Lt 33, Bit.

EASY

ACROSS: 3, Feral 8, Datum 10, Nadir 11, Bin 12, Licit 13, Benefit 15, Merit 18, Fat 19, Career 21, Funeral 22, Peal 23, Rust 24, Bayonet 26, Instil 29, Lot 31, Leers 32, Medical 34, Atlas 35, Rod 36, Flair 37, Cedar 38, Moose.
DOWN: 1, Caber 2, Tuneful 4, Emit 5, Animal 6, Later 7, Dixie 9, Tin 12, Literal 14, Fan 16, Rebut 17, Trite 19, Cajoles 20, April 21, False 23, Retired 24, Bistro 25, Nod 27, Newly 28, Train 30, Radar 32, Mass 33, Cod.

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O	E	R	T	M	S	E
A	D	R	L	E	F	E
R	R	L	B	A	E	Y
K	B	E	O	I	H	L

PAR SCORE 190-200
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

J	E	S	T
P	E	N	S
S	E	N	S
D	R	I	V

RACK 1 = 11

RACK 2 = 62

RACK 3 = 64

RACK 4 = 30

JUDD'S TOTAL 167

Iran-Israel missile clashes intensify

Drones from Yemen and attacks in Lebanon signal broader escalation

DUBAI/TEL AVIV, REUTERS

Iran fired multiple waves of missiles at Israel on Monday and vowed to “punish the aggressor” as Israeli forces struck Tehran and oil prices rose after Yemen’s Houthis entered the war in West Asia. Israel’s military said two drones from Yemen had been intercepted on Monday, two days after the Iran-aligned Houthis fired missiles at Israel for the first time since the start of the US-Israeli war on Iran that has spread across the region. The Israeli military said its forces were targeting what it described as military infrastructure in Tehran and had launched an attack on infrastructure in the Lebanese capital Beirut used by Hezbollah. The Iran-backed Lebanese



A woman stands amid a damaged residential neighbourhood hit by a US-Israeli strike in Tehran on Monday. REUTERS

group also fired more rockets at Israel on Monday, Israeli authorities said. President Donald Trump said on Sunday the United States and Iran had been meeting “directly and indirectly” and that Iran’s new leaders — following the killing of Iran’s supreme leader on February 28 — have been “very reasonable”. But he has also been sending more US troops to the region, leading Iran’s parliament speaker to accuse Washington of sending messages about

possible negotiations while planning a ground invasion and prompting further defiance from Tehran. Iran’s acting defence minister, Majid Ebn-e Reza, was quoted by the Iranian news agency IRNA on Monday as telling his Turkish counterpart that Tehran would continue to “punish aggressors, create deterrence and ensure war won’t repeat itself”. The month-long war has spread across the region, killing thousands, causing the biggest disruption to energy

GLOBAL TENSIONS RISE OVER IRAN MOVES

- Iran’s parliament is reviewing the possibility of leaving the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said on Monday, while insisting Tehran will not seek nuclear weapons.
- Iran said on Monday its ambassador to Lebanon would remain in his post in Beirut, defying the Lebanese Foreign Ministry, which has declared him persona non grata and told him to leave.
- Spain has closed its airspace to US planes involved in the Iran war, the defence minister said, marking another step in the government’s opposition to US and Israeli involvement.
- US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Monday voiced hope for working with elements within Iran’s government, saying the US privately had received positive messages.

One more Indian killed in drone strike on Kuwait

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The number of Indians killed in West Asia has risen to eight, with one more national losing his life in a drone attack carried out by Iran. The man was killed when a service building at a water desalination plant in Kuwait was targeted in a drone strike on Sunday. The Indian Embassy confirmed the death of an Indian national on Monday and said it was coordinating with Kuwaiti authorities to provide support and assistance. India’s envoy to Kuwait City, Paramita Tripathi, later visited the mortuary where the mortal remains were kept and met Brig Abdulrahim Al-Awadhi of the General Department of Criminal Evidence. Aseem R Mahajan, Additional Secretary (Gulf) at the Ministry of External Affairs, said eight Indian nationals had died in West Asia since the conflict began, while another remains missing.

WORLD AT A GLANCE



A painting of “Fish” by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, one of three artworks stolen from the Magnani Rocca Foundation in Parma, Italy. REUTERS FILE

Thieves steal Renoir, Cézanne and Matisse works from museum

► Thieves made off with three paintings by Renoir, Cézanne and Matisse worth millions from a museum near the city of Parma in northern Italy, AP/PTI reports from Rome. The heist took place on the night of March 22–23, with thieves forcing open the entrance door, police said. The three stolen paintings are “Fish” by Auguste Renoir, “Still Life with Cherries” by Paul Cézanne, and “Odalisque on the Terrace” by Henri Matisse. The Magnani Rocca Foundation, a private museum, lies in the heart of the countryside about 20 km from Parma. Local media reported that the thieves were able to take the paintings in less than three minutes and escape across the museum gardens. Established in 1977, the foundation hosts the collection of art historian Luigi Magnani and also includes works by Dürer, Rubens, Van Dyck, Goya and Monet. The museum believes a structured and organised gang was responsible for the theft, which was interrupted by an alarm, local media reported. The museum did not post any statement about the theft on its website and was not reachable for comment, as it is closed on Monday.

70 killed in South Sudan

► Gunmen killed more than 70 people in South Sudan over a gold mining row on the outskirts of the capital over the weekend, AP/PTI reports from Juba. A video of dozens of bodies lying on open ground was shared online, and a local journalist said many other victims are believed to have fled to the bushes. The gold mining site at Jebel Iraq in Central Equatoria State has, in the past, been the site of violent clashes between illegal miners and mining companies. Police spokesperson Kwaciwok Dominic Amondoc said he would share more information about the attack once he gets more details. “All I know is that unknown gunmen attacked Jebel Iraq at a gold mine. There are more than 70 dead and many more injured,” he said. The Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army condemned the attack on Monday and blamed government forces.

Afghanistan, Pak exchange heavy fire after pause

Violations took place from Afghan side, says Islamabad

KABUL, REUTERS

Afghanistan and Pakistan traded heavy fire, both sides said, days after they announced a temporary pause in fighting, escalating tensions in the volatile region as Islamabad said it hopes to

host potential talks between the US and Iran. The border clashes came on Sunday, the day Pakistan hosted regional powers to discuss de-escalation in the war in West Asia, with an announcement that Islamabad could host the talks in the coming days. Both sides used artillery and heavy weapons to hit locations in Afghanistan’s Kunar province and the bordering district of Bajur in Pakistan, officials said. Pakistan’s fire killed at least one person and injured another 16, most of them women

and children, said Hamdullah Fitrat, a deputy spokesperson for Kabul’s Taliban administration. Pakistan only responded to shelling from Afghanistan, security officials said, denying that it targeted any civilian locations. A Pakistani government official said Afghanistan’s claim was exaggerated. “Some minor violations took place from the Afghan side and we responded to it in the same sector,” he said. The officials declined to be identified as they were not authorised to speak to the media.

Myanmar to install junta chief as prez

NAYPYIDAW, AFP

Myanmar cleared the way on Monday for a coup-leading general Min Aung Hlaing to become president and maintain his rule in civilian garb, with lawmakers nominating him as a vice-presidential candidate and the junta replacing him as military commander. Min Aung Hlaing has ruled Myanmar since 2021, when he ordered a coup toppling the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi — detaining the Nobel Peace Prize laureate, dissolving her party

and triggering civil war. After five years of hardline rule, he oversaw heavily restricted elections that criminalised protest or criticism of the vote and returned a walkover win for pro-military parties in late January. “This political manoeuvring signals that Min Aung Hlaing intends to continue ruling the country with an iron fist,” said analyst Naing Min Khant of the Institute for Strategy and Policy Myanmar think tank. “He fundamentally lacks legitimacy but desperately craves the façade of it.”

Russia vows to keep supplying oil to Cuba

MOSCOW, PTI: Russia will continue to supply energy resources to Havana, the Kremlin said on Monday, as a Russian tanker carrying the first consignment of 773 thousand barrels of oil reached a Cuban port. “We will continue working. In the desperate situation the Cubans now find themselves, we cannot remain indifferent. Therefore, we will continue working on this issue,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. The energy situation in Havana has worsened following the US operation in Venezuela.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY



Markets slump over 2% as war enters fifth week

MUMBAI, PTI: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended the last trading session of the 2025-26 fiscal year sharply lower on Monday, as the war in West Asia and surging crude oil prices kept investor sentiment fragile. Weak trends in Asian markets and unabated foreign fund outflows also added to the bearish trend in domestic equities. Declining for the second day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 1,635.67 points or 2.22% to settle at 71,947.55. During the day, it plunged 1,809.09 points or 2.45% to 71,774.13. A total of 3,563 stocks declined, while 876 advanced and 154 remained unchanged on the BSE. The 50-share NSE Nifty slumped 488.20 points or 2.14% to end at 22,331.40. “The downturn was primarily driven by escalating geopolitical tensions in West Asia, which dashed hopes of de-escalation and pushed crude prices higher, raising concerns over inflation and macro stability for oil-importing economies like India. Weak global cues, including declines across Asian and US markets, coupled with continued foreign institutional outflows and a weakening rupee, further weighed on sentiment,” Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, jumped 2.18% to \$115.1 per barrel.

Indian currency breaches 95-mark in intra-day trade

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Indian rupee hit a fresh new low on Monday, slipping below the 95-mark against the US dollar for the first time, even as the RBI announced measures to curb speculative trading activities. The rupee started Monday

trading on a positive note up by 1.3%, from the record low of 94.85 on March 27. However, the relief proved short-lived. The Indian currency slipped below the psychologically-important 95-mark and hit a new record low of 95.23 against the dollar intra-day. It settled the day marginally higher at 94.70. The rupee witnessed volatile trading, despite the RBI’s intervention. In an order issued on Friday, the RBI has directed all banks to limit their net open position on the Indian currency (NOP-INR) in the onshore deliverable market to be within \$100 million at the end of each business day. This has been regarded as



an unusual move by the central bank in an attempt to clamp down on currency volatility. “Even though the RBI directive will curb excessive speculation in the futures market, this is insufficient to prevent the weakness in the currency which stems from the rising trade and CAD triggered by the spike in crude and sustained

FPI selling in the market,” said VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited. The Indian currency has weakened by around 4% since the beginning of the US-Israel-Iran conflict at the end of February. Meanwhile, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman claimed that the Indian economy is strong and the rupee depreciation is in line with the weakness in other Asian currencies. “India’s economy is strong, our fiscal situation is strong, and the entire world is praising our fiscal deficit management. Our forex reserves are solid,”

Sitharaman said replying to a supplementary question in the Lok Sabha on rupee depreciation. “Compared to other emerging economies, the rupee is doing fine, absolutely going fine,” she said, adding that the depreciation is not specific to the Indian currency, as major other Asian currencies have also depreciated. “The \$700 billion-plus external reserve, we believe, is sufficiently strong to deter speculative moves and reposition rupee to levels that enhance export competitiveness sans imposing a burden on the country,” SBI Research said in a note.

CoinDCX sets up Rs 100 cr fund

BENGALURU, DHNS: Crypto exchange CoinDCX on Monday announced a Rs 100 crore fund towards Digital Suraksha Network (DSN) to build cyber safety infrastructure. The commitment comes after founders Sumit Gupta and Neeraj Khandelwal landed in police custody, as they were erroneously booked for crypto fraud, as scammers impersonated their brand. Both founders took to X and recounted that the fraud at the centre of this complaint was carried out through a fake website — coindcx.pro — by impersonators who have no connection to their platform, systems, or CoinDCX. “No money moved through CoinDCX. No transaction occurred on our exchange. The complainant himself confirmed in court that he did not know us and had never met us,” they said, adding that their experience was deeply unsettling. The founders mentioned

that in 2025, Indians filed 28.15 lakh cybercrime complaints — a 24% spike over the previous year. Total financial losses were Rs 22,495 crore, and investment scams alone accounted for 76% of that money. They said DSN is not about protecting one platform; it is about building the shared infrastructure between regulators, platforms, and citizens that prevents fraud from happening in the first place, which could protect every Indian who participates in digital finance. “Over 100 million Indians use crypto. Most have never been told how a regulated platform actually works, what KYC means, what FIU registration ensures, or how to check whether a website is real. The DSN will fund ‘Caution Before Transaction’, a nationwide initiative to give every Indian the tools to participate in digital finance safely,” both Gupta and Khandelwal said.

Vedanta moves SC over takeover bid of JAL by Adani

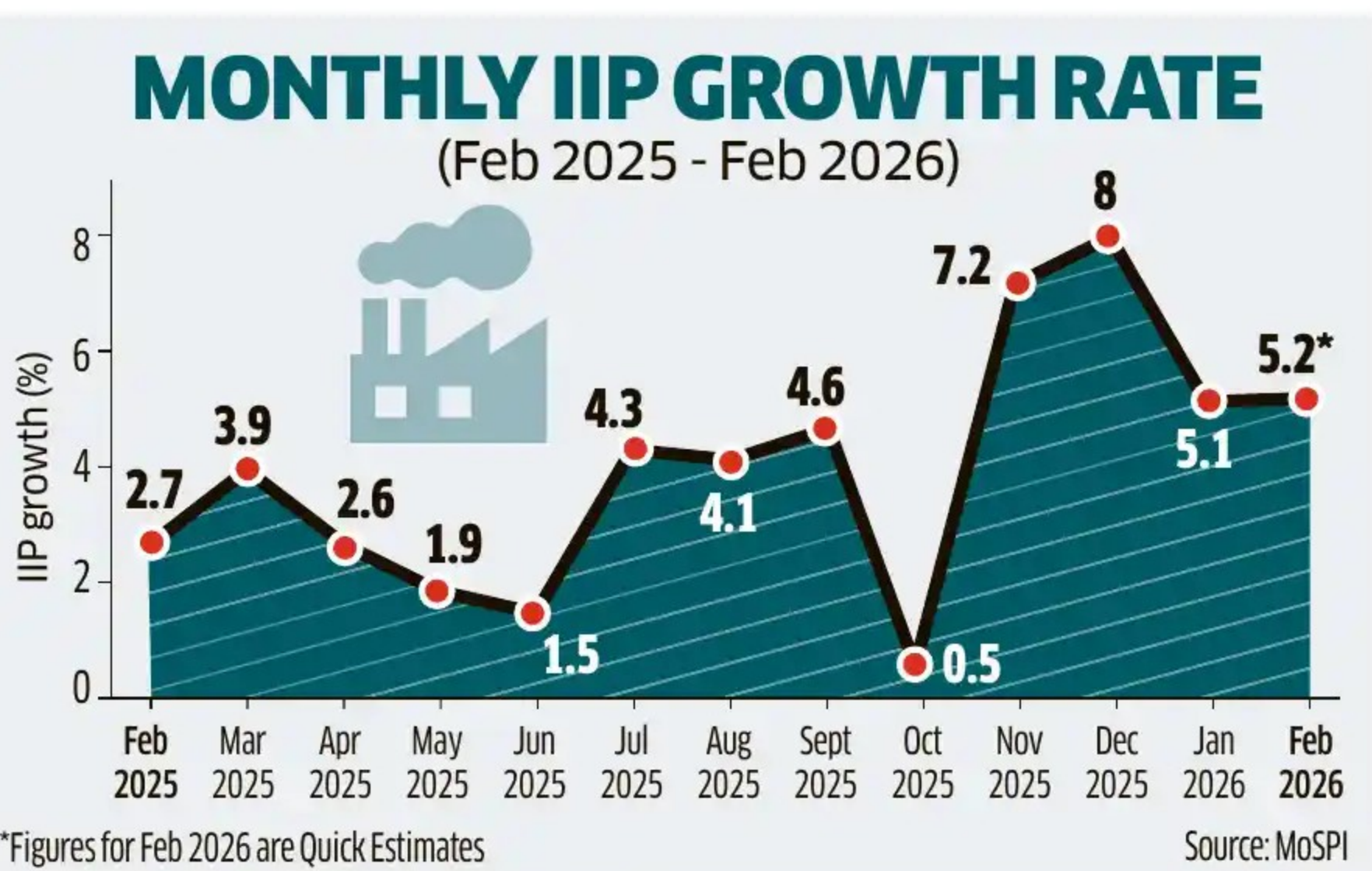
ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Mining mogul Anil Agarwal’s Vedanta Ltd has approached the Supreme Court for a stay on the proposed takeover of Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (JAL) by Gautam Adani’s Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) allegedly in violation of the insolvency resolution process. The plea questioned the validity of the March 24, 2026, order by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal, which declined to grant stay on the resolution plan, even after admitting Vedanta’s challenge for consideration. It contended that the current resolution plan fails to fulfill the core objective of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, maximisation of the value of the corporate debtor’s assets.



Anil Agarwal Gautam Adani

It was stated that the lenders had previously approved the resolution plan put forth by AEL and rejected bids of various companies, including Dalmia Bharat and Jindal Power. The committee of creditors had approved AEL’s plan with a 93.81% voting share and the Allahabad Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) approved its resolution plan on March 17. It was also contended that AEL offered to pay Rs 14,535 crore, while Vedanta, for its part, made an initial bid of Rs 17,000 crore, of which the upfront cash component was about Rs 4,000 crore and the rest payable over six years. Subsequently, Vedanta revised its bid, offering a total of Rs 16,726 crore, of which Rs 6,563 crore was to be paid upfront, while the rest payable in five years.



Industrial output growth rises to 5.2% in Feb on strong mfg

Manufacturing sector logs growth of 6% during month

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India’s industrial output growth rose to 5.2% in February, driven by strong performance of the manufacturing sector on the post-festive demand and low base, as per official data released on Monday. Factory output, measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), had posted a growth of 2.7% in February 2025. In January 2026, it stood at 5.1%. The manufacturing sector posted a robust growth of 6% year-on-year in February, against 2.8% expansion recorded in the same month last year, National Statistics Office data showed. “Post-festive demand has remained relatively strong, as average growth during November 2025 to February 2026 at 6.4%, was highest since August-November 2023. This point towards a strong demand, however, the West Asia crisis is expected

to change the situation,” said Devendra Pant, Chief Economist, India Ratings and Research. There have been reports of shortage of LPG forcing certain industries to scale down their production. India receives more than one-third of its remittances from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and if the crisis prolongs for a longer time, it will have an impact on demand and thus industrial production, he added. Within the manufacturing sector, 14 out of 23 industry groups recorded a positive growth in February 2026 over February 2025. The top three positive contributors for the month of February 2026 are — manufacture of basic metals (13.2%), manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers (14.9%), and manufacture of machinery and equipment (10.2%). Mining production growth rose to 3.1% in February, from 1.6% recorded in the same month last year. However, it was lower than the 4.3% expansion recorded in January. Power generation growth decelerated on a month-on-month, as well as year-on-year basis. Power generation grew by 2.3% in February, compared to 3.6% expansion in the year-ago period.

Beyond marks: Reimagining assessment methods

KRISHNARAJA M MANJUNATH



A few years ago, I met two students. One had scored over 95% in school examinations. His report cards were flawless. Yet when he entered college, he struggled to speak in class, hesitated to make decisions, and found teamwork difficult. His marks had been excellent — but his confidence and communication were fragile.

The other student had scored around 65%. His academic record was considered “average.” But he asked sharp questions, expressed ideas clearly, and demonstrated strong problem-solving ability. Within a few years, he was leading projects in a startup.

This contrast is familiar to many teachers and parents. We often say, “Marks are not everything.” Yet our education system behaves as if they are.

Marks measure only a narrow slice of human ability — mainly memory, exam preparation, discipline, and subject familiarity. These are important. But real success in studies, career, and life depends on many other capabilities: curiosity, concentration, communication, resilience, decision-making, teamwork, and execution.

Unfortunately, these abilities are rarely

Students lose confidence when effort does not translate into results. Parents invest heavily in coaching and courses without clarity about what the child actually needs. Institutions continue to emphasise marks because they lack a structured alternative.

In medicine, doctors do not rely on symptoms alone. They measure blood pressure, sugar levels, and other indicators before prescribing treatment. In finance, credit scores help assess financial behaviour. In education, however, we still largely rely on marks — a limited indicator — while the deeper drivers of growth go unmeasured.

When students understand why they struggle — whether it is concentration, confidence, planning, or communication — improvement becomes purposeful rather than frustrating.

One possible step is for colleges to consciously build “Ability Labs” as part of their academic ecosystem. These are not conventional labs with equipment, but structured environments where students regularly engage in activities that reveal and develop core capabilities — such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and decision-making.

Through guided discussions, short presentations, group tasks, and real-life simulations, students can be observed on how they think, express, collaborate, and execute. The purpose is not to grade them with marks, but to systematically understand and document these abilities over time. Without such dedicated spaces, these capabilities remain invisible and therefore unmanaged. Ability Labs can provide institutions with a practical way to move beyond theory and begin capturing what truly drives student growth.

The goal is not to dismiss marks. Marks matter. They reflect effort and academic learning. But they should be seen as one indicator among many, not the sole measure of a young person’s potential.

For decades, we have repeated the idea that “marks are not everything”. Perhaps the time has come to move beyond the slogan and build systems that actually measure and develop the abilities that shape human growth.

Only then will our education system begin to see students not just as scores, but as individuals with evolving capabilities and possibilities.

(The author is a former civil services officer and a human resource development scientist)

BULLETIN BOARD

Smartphone Short Film competition for students
Talking Films Online (TFO) has announced its 6th Annual Smartphone Short Film Competition, inviting Indian students aged 18 to 25 residing in India or abroad to submit their work. The contest features a total prize pool of Rs 33,000, with individual awards for the Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze categories, as well as Jury Special Mention Certificates for technical excellence in areas such as acting and cinematography. Entries must be original, unexhibited films between 5 and 10 minutes in length, shot entirely on smartphones, and can be in any language, provided they include English subtitles. There is no entry fee. Submission link: <https://t.ly/-5Ejr> Last date: May 15, 2026. Call for details: 9327427242.

Marketing internship
Career360 is hiring a marketing intern who can work from home. Students with knowledge of marketing and effective communication can apply by April 24. The stipend is Rs 15,150 (lump sum). Apply at: <https://tinyurl.com/mssyb6bp>.

Student networking internship
Thinkedges Private Limited is hiring a student networking intern who can work from home. Students with knowledge of lead generation, marketing campaigns, teamwork, and leadership can apply by April 24. The stipend is Rs 3,000 -15,000/month. Apply at: <https://tinyurl.com/3yrx7954>.

Business development internship
Satyukt Analytics Private Limited is hiring a business development (sales) intern in Bengaluru. Students with knowledge of client relationship management (CRM), spoken and written English proficiency, interpersonal skills, and lead generation can apply by April 23. The stipend is Rs 10,000-15,000/month. Apply at: <https://tinyurl.com/2zt2juc2>.

Interior design internship
Athon All Terrain Pvt Ltd is hiring an interior design intern in Bengaluru. Students with knowledge of Adobe Photoshop, AutoCAD, Autodesk 3ds Max, Google SketchUp, interior design, and rendering are invited to apply by April 22. The stipend is Rs 8,000-10,000/month. Apply at: <https://tinyurl.com/3vhcev3n>.

The ethics deficit in higher education

Institutional reputation cannot be manufactured. It has to be earned, writes John J Kennedy



To be frank, the Galgotias Chinese robot fiasco and the memes and trolls that followed didn’t surprise many seasoned academics. In truth, what happened at the Global AI summit was only to be expected; misrepresentation and inflated claims disproportionate to real-life achievements have become so integral to many institutions in this highly competitive educational landscape.

Honest academics would readily admit to a strong presence of the malaise of exaggerated claims, a poor research culture, and aggressive market-driven academic and institutional branding in most campuses. It is not about one institution, but it is a rot that the entire academic space is suffering from.

It is easy to shift the blame to regulatory bodies that continually demand

quantifiable data, research papers, patents, and citations, thereby compelling institutions to deliver quick, tangible outcomes. But what about ethics, integrity, and academic honesty, which are the pillars of academic research? Aren’t individual institutions responsible and accountable?

Sadly, even as we discuss this, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has listed 32 universities in India as fake. Such universities are only increasing by the day, so much for our individual and collective sense of responsibility and accountability.

Following ethics
Against this backdrop, what must colleges and universities do to safeguard not only their reputations but also the futures of thousands of graduating

students? Well, for one, they must implement stringent guidelines. The institution’s credibility, once dented, is difficult to reclaim. Here are a few tips institutions could follow.

The foremost is strengthening academic ethics and intellectual honesty among students, faculty, and institutional leadership. For instance, presenting existing technology as an original invention cannot be a communication lapse. Simply put, it’s an ethical breach. It is common knowledge that hundreds of research papers by Indian academics are retracted for plagiarism and other fraudulent practices.

Undoubtedly, India’s research culture lacks adequate research integrity. Emphasis must be placed on familiarising all participants in the education system with intellectual property ethics,

attribution norms, and related practices. Unfortunately, in the race to achieve excellence in technical training, integrity training is relegated to the margins.

Many institutions believe that spectacle-driven marketing and advertising have also become crucial to institutional survival. For instance, grand education fairs, exhibitions, and summits are regularly held, and, ironically, what’s on display in many cases is performative innovation. If such displays are really required, then institutions must implement the following: technical validation committees, fact sheets for the exhibits, and protocols for the spokespersons. No credible research institution allows anything to be showcased without documentation clearance.

When excellence becomes cliché
Perhaps institutions must also stop harping on the cliché of excellence. There are hundreds of institutions calling themselves centres of excellence. Additionally, they claim to house many such centres on their campuses. Of course, such labels may help in rankings, admissions, and investment attraction. But, how many of these centres really deserve the label?

Often, institutions resort to unfair means to establish these centres without meeting the required criteria. Today, redefining centres of excellence is the need. Focus must not be just on publications, but also on the quality and impact of research, patents, and the outcomes visible on the ground in MoUs and collaborations. Right now, numbers determine quality, not the impact.

A critical weakness among many educational leaders is the aspiration to reach the top overnight, despite the inherent local and structural constraints they must grapple with. Fixated on that unrealistic goal, in which aspiration exceeds capacity and ambition is not

aligned with capability, integrity takes a severe beating. Imitation is inevitably disguised as innovation.

Leaders must realise that just as not all students can be rank holders, not all institutions can be number one. Each is unique, and everyone must focus on achieving quality in their own context rather than competing with Ivy League universities. That reality check is imperative for leaders.

Investing on faculty
Amidst these misgivings and misplaced priorities on external factors, the core quality indicator of higher educational institutions, which is the faculty strength, is easily forgotten. Buildings can come up in months. But faculty quality takes longer to build and is harder to showcase. In today’s glitzy, grandiose narratives constructed by institutions, quality teachers, effective teaching, and impactful research are sidelined.

Instead, institutions must invest generously in full-time faculty, provide adequate support for research and professional development, and stick to realistic teaching loads. Students, let us not forget that they evaluate institutions primarily through classroom experience. Quality faculty is the true differentiator. No doubt, regulatory compliance is required. However, they should be substantive and not cosmetic. The focus must shift from episodic compliance to sustaining standards, with internal quality assurance mechanisms.

The Galgotias episode has revealed one important truth. Institutional reputation cannot be manufactured. It has to be earned. That is possible only when institutions learn to align claims with capacity, promise only what is deliverable, and exercise authority with accountability.

(The author is a former professor and dean of a Bengaluru university)

The reform that never reached the classroom

ANITHA RAMACHANDER

An engineering student who joined a state university in 2021 believed that things were finally changing. She thought she would get to study what she was curious about, not just what her stream prescribed; that someone would actually track her progress throughout the year rather than judge her in three hours at the end; and the degree she would earn would mean something when she attends her job interview.

She graduated last year. She is still searching for work that matches her qualifications. She is not alone; many students graduate each year facing this challenge. Lack of entry-level jobs today reflects the reality of the job market.

Walk into any lecture hall of a typical institution. Not an IIT or a central university, but a quiet, unglamorous place that actually educates the overwhelming majority of India’s 43 million enrolled students. In most of these institutions, Outcome-Based Education (OBE) either does not exist or is not properly implemented.

A teacher lectures, and students take notes. The semester passes. An exam tests memory rather than reasoning. Grades are awarded and degrees conferred. Whether the student truly understood anything, could apply it, or whether it changed how she thinks- nobody in the system is formally asking.

Classrooms in crisis
A young faculty member explains his own quiet battle. He had entered teaching with ideas. He wanted his students to argue with each other, wrestle with problems that had no clear answers, and leave his class thinking differently than when they arrived. But the week ended before he could accomplish any of that. There was an accreditation portal that needed updating. A mandatory workshop on implementing the National



Education Policy (NEP) reforms left no time to put anything into practice. A committee and a report. A student in crisis who needed an hour. By Friday afternoon, he had spent more time on documentation than teaching, and the lesson he planned to redesign was still waiting where he had left it on Monday.

This is another crisis. As of early 2026, about 25% to 30% of teaching posts in Indian Central Universities are vacant, and more than 50% of professor posts in the best universities are vacant. This has resulted in an increased workload for the remaining teachers. The remaining teachers are committed to doing a good job, but their week is already packed with other tasks.

Accreditation bodies responsible for ensuring quality in Indian higher education mainly focus on paperwork. In institutions, files are prepared, criteria are documented, assessment teams come and go, and grades are awarded. Meanwhile, the classroom — the actual space where a student and a teacher meet and something either happens or does not — remains exactly as it had been.

Accreditation that cannot reach the lecture hall and students is not quality assurance; it is simply a well-organised filing cabinet.

Meanwhile, the student understood the system perfectly. The exam expects her to write clearly and completely what has been taught. It did not require her to think about it, to expand on it, or to make connections to her reading. She was only concerned with the actual incentives in front of her, not those in the prospectus. The clarity was a rational response to a system that had never rewarded her for thinking.

Failure of NEP?
NEP had promised exactly that: the Academic Bank of Credits with multiple entry and exit points and subjects drawn from across the curriculum. The student who had received these promises had tried, in her second year, to enrol in a course outside her stream. She was told it was available. When she asked again, no one had been assigned to teach it. The promise had been made, but the classroom had not been informed.

Five years after NEP, it is fair to ask what has truly changed. Although higher education has evolved, frameworks have shifted, and the number of institutions has grown, actual implementation has not reached many universities.

Reforms that exist only on paper are not real reforms. What students need is an examination that tests their minds and gives teachers enough time to appreciate their efforts. They need a degree that genuinely makes a difference during an interview. That is true reform in higher education in India.

(The author is a Bengaluru-based academic)

Questions? Suggestions? Feedback? Write to us: dheducation@deccanherald.co.in

The blown fuse: Why failure is your internal circuit’s best friend

DINAKAR JAGADISH

In the competitive pressure-cooker of Bangalore’s education system, we are taught to fear failure like a blackout. We view a low grade, a rejected application, or a missed opportunity as a personal defect — a sign that our internal light has burned out. But if we look at the world through the lens of a Co-operative Reality, we discover a much more empowering truth.

You are a distinct individual, an ‘instrument’ designed for a specific purpose. Through you flows a “current” — the universal energy that powers all life and success. If you view your journey this way, failure takes on a completely different meaning. It isn’t a catastrophe; it’s a blown fuse.

The anatomy of the fuse
In any sophisticated electrical system, a fuse is a safety device. When the current becomes too high or is flowing in a dangerous direction, the fuse breaks. It stops the flow to protect the more expensive and delicate machinery inside.

As a student, your ‘inner machinery’ is your unique potential — your Swabhava. Sometimes, in our rush to succeed, we push ourselves toward a path that doesn’t align with our true wiring. Or perhaps we try to handle a “voltage” of responsibility that we aren’t yet prepared to conduct.

When you fail, the ‘divine current’ hasn’t abandoned you. Instead, the “System” has blown a fuse to protect your core potential from being permanently damaged by a path that wasn’t right for you at that time.

Why does the flow stop
There are usually three reasons why your “fuse” might blow during your student years:

- **Wrong direction:** You are a high-speed “motor” trying to act like a “heater.” You are pursuing a career or a subject because of social pressure, not because it matches your distinct ability. The failure is a signal to stop and recalibrate your blueprint.
- **Lack of conductivity:** Your “wire” (your habits

and discipline) isn’t thick enough yet to handle the power of the success you desire. If you got that massive opportunity today, it might destroy your character or health. The failure is an invitation to go back and strengthen your consistent action.

■ **Divine timing:** The “grid” isn’t ready for you yet. Success requires a handshake between your effort and the world’s readiness. A “blown fuse” forces you to wait until the timing is perfect.

How to reset the circuit
Most students react to failure by throwing away the whole machine. They give up. But a wise student understands that a blown fuse is meant to be replaced and redirected.

■ **Audit the resistance:** Ask yourself, “Where was I forcing things?” Was your action in the “right Manner,” or were you acting out of ego and comparison?

■ **Clean the Wire:** Use the downtime caused by failure to refine your skills. If the current stopped, use that silence to practice your “action” with even more precision.

■ **Trust the current:** Remember, the electricity didn’t disappear. The power is still in the grid. Just because the light went out momentarily doesn’t mean you aren’t a “lightbulb.” It just means you need a better connection.

The success of the redirected
Some of the greatest icons in Bengaluru’s tech and arts history failed repeatedly. They didn’t succeed because they were “perfect,” but because they respected the blown fuse. They realised that the “current” was redirecting them toward a place where their distinct potential could shine brightest without burning out.

So, the next time you face a setback, don’t mourn the darkness. Thank the System for protecting your potential. Replace the fuse with the wire of Consistent Action, align your Intent with your true nature, and wait for the Right Time.

When the light comes back on — and it will — it will be brighter and more sustainable than ever before.

(The author is a personality development expert)



IN BRIEF

Naeem, Royan star for Ascho

► Naeem and Royan hit hat-tricks as Ascho Hockey Club defeated Major Dhyanchand Hockey Club, Dharwad 14-0 in the KSHA 'B' Division Hockey League Championship on Monday, reports DHNS.

Result: Ascho: 14 (Naeem 2nd, 49th, 55th, 56th, John Bosco 6th, Sundhar Raj 12th, 14th, Sham 16th, Govind 26th, 54th, Sridhar 28th, Royan 31st, 35th, 45th).

Robinson 'tricks in RR Nagar win

► Robinson A scored a hat-trick while Luke Anthony netted a brace as Rajarajeshwari nagar thrashed Malleshwaram 11-0 in the in the second edition of the Chief Minister's Cup football tournament at the BFS here on Monday, reports DHNS.

Results: Rajarajeshwari nagar: 11 (Luke Anthony 8th, 17th, Michael E 11th, Sureen S 27th, Robinson A 29th, 47th, 54th, Jackie Sunil M 70th, Kevin Lourdanatan A 84th, Rivaldo JC 85th, S Sachin 87th) bt Malleshwaram: 0; Shivajinagar: 4 (Sachin Kumar S 10th, 68th, Darin Marcel Christopher 21st, Santo 44th) bt Padmanabhanagar: 1 (Yashas S 8th).

India win nine medals

► The Indian Wushu team delivered a historic performance at the 10th World Junior Wushu Championship, bagging a haul of nine medals, including three gold, reports PTI from Tianjin City, China.

Apart from the three gold, Indian players clinched two silvers and four bronze medals. India particularly dominated in the Sanda (fighting) events with Thongam Upendro (Boys 45 kg), Nong-maithem Pamheiba (Junior Boys 52kg), and Loitongbam Victor (Youth Boys 52kg) winning the gold.

World Athletics U-20 final trials moved to Tumakuru

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

The National Junior U-20 Athletics Federation Competition has been moved from Mangaluru to Tumakuru while the event's dates remain unchanged from April 24 to 26.

An official confirmed that earlier there was a mistake in the Athletics Federation of India calendar as Mangaluru's venue wasn't ready to host a national-level event. The Karnataka Athletics Association then considered changing the venue to Bengaluru's Sree Kanteerava Stadium but the venue is unavailable due to Bengaluru FC's match against Mumbai City in the Indian Super League on April 25, urging the body to move the competition to Tumakuru's Mahatma Gandhi Stadium.

The three-day track and field event will serve as the final trials for the World Athletics U-20 Championships in Oregon on August 5-9. Athletes born in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 are considered eligible for the event.

ON TV

CRICKET
IPL: PBKS vs GT (7:30 pm). LIVE on Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.

FOOTBALL
Asian Qualifiers: India vs Hong Kong (7:30 pm). LIVE on FanCode.

IFL: Gokulam Kerala vs Aizawl FC (6:30 pm). LIVE on Sony Sports Ten 5, SonyLIV.

U-23 Tri-Nation: India vs Tajikistan (7 pm). LIVE on Sony Sports Ten 2, SonyLIV.

Friendlies: Norway vs Switzerland (9:30 pm), Scotland vs Ivory Coast (12 am, Wednesday), Algeria vs Uruguay (1 am, Wednesday). LIVE on Sony Sports Ten 2, SonyLIV, FanCode.

WC Qualifiers: Bosnia-Herzegovina vs Italy, Sweden vs Poland, Kosovo vs Türkiye (all 12:15 am, Wednesday). LIVE on Sony Sports Network, SonyLIV.

SPORT

State-run sports infra in a shambles: CAG

Disparity in creation & deficiencies in maintaining facilities flagged in report

HITA PRAKASH
BENGALURU, DHNS

If mismanagement in terms of irregular release of cash incentives, discrepancies in awards to Karnataka sportspersons by the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports (DYES) formed a part of the findings in the latest Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) report, 'regional disparity' in creation of sports infrastructure and 'deficiencies' in maintaining facilities make up the other part.

Under the 'Regional Disparities in distribution of expenditure towards Sports Infrastructure', 29 out of the

31 districts accounted for just 0-6 percent of the total expenditure, with districts -- Bidar, Dharwad, Kalaburgi, Ramanagara and Vijayanagara -- receiving no funds till date.

"The major portion of the grants were invested only in two districts -- Mandya and Bengaluru Urban -- with expenditure of 14 and 39 percent respectively," the CAG pointed out in its report for the period 2019-2024.

"We, in eight test-checked districts, observed idle or under-utilised infrastructure, poor maintenance, limited access to taluks, regional disparities and issues such as incorrect site selection and repeated changes in the scope of works," accused the report futher summarising that the government/ DYES did not identify and prioritise districts/ taluks for creating sporting facilities which lacked basic infrastructure.

Stating Karnataka's 2018 Sports Policy, which mentions

68 boys in four rooms at sports hostel!

The CAG, in its damning report, charged that the physical evaluation at two DYES sports schools and eight hostels in the test-checked districts, threw light on the miserable conditions that grassroot athletes have to endure.

In Dharwad sports hostel, CAG found that 68 boys were accommodated in four rooms and 32 girls in four rooms without proper ventilation. In Davangere, 160 candidates were accommodated in 28 rooms with only four bathrooms usable out

of 12 where either the tap was not working or a door was broken. Here, 'the food was not as per mandated quality and not the same as mentioned in the menu'.

In Vijayapura's girls sports hostel, there was no solar heater for bathing water, no drinking water leading to 200 litres of daily purchase and the kitchen and dining room had cracks within a year of completion.

Under the 'Lack of provision of gender specific hostels', CAG observed a to-

tal of 8,023 boys and 3,477 girls enrolled in sports hostels across the state during the years 2019-2024. "The Karnataka Evaluation Authority's October 2020 report recommended establishing separate ladies hostels and gender-specific facilities at training centres. The absence of such, hinders female athletes' participation due to safety concerns and limits the opportunities. However, no action in this regard was found taken by the DYES till date," noted CAG.

Sports Centres for conducting regular taluk and district-level games could not be established by the DYES in the 29 sampled taluks due to the non-availability of taluk stadiums.

"This underscores the absence of systematic planning

and insufficient need assessment by the DYES in carrying out policy mandate. The fact remains that 89 taluks remained without sports infrastructure thereby the local youths were deprived of access to facilities necessary for nur-

turing sporting talent," said the CAG.

According to the audit, out of the 233 undertakings -- including construction and upgradation of stadiums -- with a total estimated cost of Rs 342.51 crore, as many as 57 works costing Rs 45.64 crore were still in progress. And out of the 172 completed works, 43 costing Rs 43.84 crore, were finished without obtaining technical sanctions while 11 slated to be completed were not handed over either to District Stadium Management Committee (DSMC) or DYES and four were not taken up by the agencies.

The CAG's joint physical verification of stadiums across eight sampled districts and 29 taluks revealed unhygienic conditions, substandard arenas, waterlogging, garbage accumulation, absence of cleaning staff, lack of drainage systems, lack of approach roads, absence of watch and ward staff, among others, leading to misuse of premises.

Samveg stars in HBR BC win over Mandya

BENGALURU, DHNS: Samveg's 32-point effort powered HBR BC to a comfortable 74-18 win over Mandya in a boys' super league match at the State Junior Boys and Girls Basketball Championship for the DN Rajanna Trophy at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium here on Monday.

LOCAL BASKETBALL

Results (Super League matches): Boys: HBR BC: 74 (Samveg 32, Siddhartha 18) bt Mandya: 18 (Yashwanth 4). HT: 44-8; Chikkamagalur: 66 (Om Shetty 12, Rishabh 12) bt Dharwad B: 36 (Tejas 10). HT: 50-21; DK: 65 (Divith Shenava 20, Lydeo Samvel 13) bt DYES Bangalore: 47 (Vaibhav 27, Mohan Gowda 10). HT: 37-24; Hoop-7 BC: 84 (Dev 18, Samarth 16) bt Mysuru B: 34 (Roshan 9, Rohith 9). HT: 53-17; Mysuru A: 67 (Harshith 23, Shlok 15) bt Southern Blues: 63 (Dishanth 21). HT: 25-26; MNK Rao Park BC: 64 (Vijayeendra 15, Vasisht 12) bt Dharwad B: 34 (Ramesh 11). HT: 37-13; Beagles: 69 (Anirudh 12, Devchran 11) bt Dharwad B: 12. HT: 34-4; DK: 65 (Divith 18, Lydel 15) bt Lakshyan: 53 (Pranav 19, Mahasvin 13). HT: 41-28; PPC: 81 (Akshath 26, Ryan 16) bt Mysuru B: 24 (Anurag 5). HT: 38-10; JSC: 66 (Arshad 27) bt Mandya: 13. HT: 37-10; Viveks SC: 60 (Anshul 30, Sandesh 10) bt Southern Blues: 29 (Dishanth 12). HT: 31-18.

Girls: Mounts BC: 70 (Nilaya 23, Nidhi 21) bt Vijayapura: 63 (Sakshi 23, Shivabai 22). HT: 41-35; Mysuru A: 63 (Shravani 23, Aanchal 13) bt Mysuru B: 55 (Apoorva 26). HT: 32-25; Mandya: 53 (Kusuma 11) bt Dharwad B: 16 (Samruddhi 8). HT: 29-3; Blore Vanguard: 42 (Aarushi 14, Sanjana 8) bt Chamrajnagar: 9 (Monisha 7). HT: 21-7; Viveks SC: 63 (Jeyashree 19, Ruth 18) bt Lakshyan BC: 23 (Niya 11). HT: 26-5; DYES Vidyanagar: 39 (Deepika 12) bt Vijayapura: 26 (Shiv Bai 11). HT: 18-14; PPC: 43 (Samitha 14) bt Chamrajnagar: 10 (Tanushree 4). HT: 19-4; Rajmahal BC: 41 (Shreya 13, Sanvi 12) bt Dharwad B: 21. HT: 25-6; Beagles BC: 59 (Purvi Shika 17, Medha 15) bt Mysuru B: 32 (Apoorva 23). HT: 19-14.



Jannik Sinner poses with the Butch Buchholz Trophy after defeating Jiri Lehecka in the final of the Miami Open. AFP

Sinner had just pocketed the first set when the showers hit again, halting the match for 90 minutes.

It wasn't enough to unsettle Sinner, who fired 10 aces and won 33 of 36 points when he put his first serve in play.

His return game was also spot on as he handed 22nd-ranked Czech Lehecka his first service break of the tournament for a 2-1 lead in the opening frame.

Sinner trailed 0-40 in the following game but fired three service winners and a pair of aces to hold and made the advantage stand up.

The Italian gave himself a first set point in the ninth game with a blistering cross-court forehand service return winner.

Lehecka saved that one with

a service winner and saved another set point with a volley, going on to seal the hold on his sixth game point before Sinner pocketed the set with a love game.

Lehecka fought off five set points before Sinner pounced for the lone break of the second set and a 5-4 lead.

Sinner didn't face a break point in the second set and gave himself a match point with a forehand volley winner, thought he had it on a serve that was called a let, and polished it off with another winner at the net.

While Lehecka, playing in his first Masters 1000 final, couldn't follow compatriot Jakub Mensik into the Miami winner's circle, he will reach a career-high 14th in the world rankings on Monday.

Preeti, Deepak win openers

ULAANBAATAR (MONGOLIA), PTI: Asian Games bronze medallist Preeti Pawar and Deepak registered contrasting victories to begin India's campaign at the Asian Boxing Championships on a positive note here on Monday.

In the women's 54kg category, Preeti delivered a commanding performance to secure a 5-0 unanimous decision victory over Kazakhstan's Elina Bazarova, a former Asian U-22 champion (2025).

Against a highly accomplished opponent, Preeti's clinical win marked a strong statement to open her campaign.

In the men's 70kg category, Deepak, a silver medallist at the Boxam Elite International 2026 and a bronze medallist at the Asian Youth Boxing Championships 2022, edged past Uzbekistan's Khavasbek Asadullaev with a 3-2 split decision win.

Veteran Advani sets up 9-ball pool final vs Nitin

BENGALURU, DHNS: Celebrated cueist Pankaj Advani continued his dream run in his maiden pool National Championships, powering into the men's 9-ball pool final with an authoritative win in the semifinals in Ludhiana, Punjab on Monday.

The PSPB pro hardly put a foot wrong in his 11-5 demolition of Karnataka's Kushal Chandrashekar, who finished fifth in the previous edition three years ago. In the title clash on Tuesday, the 40-year-old Advani takes on Chandigarh's Nitin Sharma,



Pankaj Advani

who edged out S Shrikrishna 11-10 in the other semifinal.

Known for his brilliant safety and surefire potting, Advani had his rival on a tight leash from the get-go. Capitalising on his rival's largesse, he was off the blocks in a jiffy, jumping to a 4-0 lead in the race-to-11 clash.

A rare error from Advani gave Kushal a look-in in the fifth rack. The multiple-time World champion in snooker and billiards, snookered himself after taking 4 to the bottom right-hand pocket. Not looking a gift horse in the mouth, Kushal pulled one back.

In the other semifinal, locked 10-10, Nitin made it a start to finish affair with his break. After potting 1 and 3 with his break, the Chandigarh pro made it a break and run to set up a mouth-watering meeting with Advani.

Results: Men (semifinals): Pankaj Advani (PSPB) bt Kushal Chandrashekar (KCR) 11-5; Nitin Sharma (Cnd) bt S Shrikrishna (PSPB) 11-10.

Praggnanandhaa draws with Wei Yi, stays in joint lead

PAPHOS (CYPRUS), PTI: Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa played out an easy draw as black against Wei Yi of China and stayed in joint lead on 1.5 points after the second round of the FIDE Candidates tournament here on Monday.

After a brilliant first round win over Anish Giri, Praggnanadhaa appeared to be in fine fettle for the second day running, putting a bit of pressure on his Chinese counterpart out of a French defense game with black pieces.

Wei Yi decided against going for a complicated struggle and the pieces changed hands at regular intervals leading to a drawn opposite coloured Bishops endgame.

Praggnanadhaa had an extra pawn to boast but white's position was simply impregnable. The peace was signed in 46 moves.

While the opening round provided a lot of fireworks with as many as three decisive games out of a possible four, things calmed down in the second game. Anish Giri played solidly with his white pieces to draw with Fabiano Caruana of United States and Uzbek star Javokhir Sindarov was held to a draw by Matthias Bluebaum of Germany.

The other game of the eight-player double round-robin tournament

was also poised for a draw as Hikaru Nakamura of the United States was trying to hold a theoretically drawn rook and pawns endgame against Andrey Esipenko of Russia.

In the women's section being played simultaneously, Divya Deshmukh missed out on a massive opportunity to go into sole lead as she blundered in a winning position against compatriot R Vaishali.

Divya got a tactical finesse when both players ran low on time and she spotted it just in time. However, the Nagpur based women's World Cup winner misplayed very quickly and allowed Vaishali to get off the hook with a fine counter blow involving a queen sacrifice.

Jiner Zhu of China was the other one to miss out on a nearly winning position that she squandered against Russian Kateryna Lagno. The game was drawn after Lagno found a rook sacrifice with little time left on her clock to force the split of the point.

Results (round 1): Men: Wei Yi (Chn, 1) drew with R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 1.5); Anish Giri (Ned, 0.5) drew with Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 1.5); Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb, 1.5) drew with Matthias Bluebaum (Ger, 0.5); Andrey Esipenko (Rus) playing Hikaru Nakamura (Usa).

Women (round 2): Kateryna Lagno (Rus, 1) drew with Jiner Zhu (Chn, 1); Divya Deshmukh (Ind, 1) drew with R Vaishali (Ind); Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kaz, 1) drew with Aleksandra Goryachkina (Rus, 1); Anna Muzychuk (Ukr, 1) drew with Zhongyi Tan (Chn, 1).



Indian Grandmaster R Vaishali's (above) tussle with fellow countrywoman Divya Deshmukh ended in a draw in the second round of the Candidates on Monday. PTI FILE PHOTO

Premier League fans back call to scrap VAR

LONDON, AFP: More than three-quarters of Premier League fans would like to see VAR scrapped and even more believe it has a detrimental impact on the matchday experience, according to a survey by the Football Supporters' Association (FSA).

The poll of nearly 8,000 supporters, just over half of whom attend more than 15 home games a season, showed how unpopular the current system has become despite the Premier League insisting it has resulted in more correct decisions.

Asked if they support the use of VAR, 76 per cent said they do not, with more than 70 percent disagreeing that it has improved the overall accuracy of refereeing decisions.

The consensus that VAR has made football less enjoyable was nearly unanimous at 97 per cent.

Ardakan wins main event

MUMBAI RESULTS

Ardakan, trained by PS Chouhan and ridden by Vivek G, won the Cursetjee Dhunjishaw Salver, the feature event of the races on Monday.

1. Brave Hunter Plate - 1600M: Maratha Admiral (NS Parmar) 1; Mighty Hero (P Trevor) 2; Abhyankar (Peter) 3; Flash Mob (C Umesh) 4. WB: 2-1/2, 1-1/2, T: 1:38.22; TB: MK Jadhav; Fav: Maratha Admiral.

2. Western India Race Horse Owners Association Trophy - 2000M: Youremanorbome (PP Dhebe) 1; Caccini (A Sandesh) 2; Wings Of Fury (Vivek G) 3; Looking Like A Wow (P Trevor) 4. WB: 5, 3/4, Link T: 2:02.48; TB: PS Chouhan; Fav: Youremanorbome.

3. Blue Pencil Plate - 1000M: Dream Come True (A Sandesh) 1; Sporting Alice (Neeraj) 2; Absolute Emperor (Mukesh Kumar) 3; Queen Caroline (P Trevor) 4. WB: 5-1/2, 3/4, 1 1/4, T: 57.43; TB: Sanjay Kolse; Fav: Dream Come True.

4. Amber Flash Plate - 1600M: Shaandaar (Vivek G) 1; Golden Eye (P Trevor) 2; Incredible Luck (Yash Narredu) 3; Hermanus (Kirtish Bhagat) 4. WB: 2, 2, 2-1/4, T: 1:37.08; TB: P Shroff; Fav: Incredible Luck.

5. Cursetjee Dhunjishaw Salver - 1400M: Ardakan (Vivek G) 1; Earth (A Sandesh) 2; Your Unforgettable (P Trevor) 3; Chagall (S Siddharth) 4. WB: 1-1/4, Ns, 4 3/4, T: 1:37.08; TB: PS Chouhan; Fav: Bese Nade.

6. Busy Lizzie Plate - 1100M: American Eagle (Aditya Waydande) 1; Rafael (A Sandesh) 3; Key West (NS Parmar) 4. WB: 7-1/4, 2 1/4, 3/4, T: 1:03.57; TB: Shazaan Shah; Fav: American Eagle.

7. Secret Treasure Plate - 1200M: Neutralist (P Trevor) 1; Charlie Brown (Yash Narredu) 2; Densetsu (S Siddharth) 3; Matisse (A Prakash) 4. WB: Ns, 2-1/4, Shd. T: 1:09.36; TB: Aman A Hussain; Fav: Neutralist.

Bengaluru dividends
I race: Rs 32 w; 15, 18, 17 p; Fc: Rs 137; Q: Rs 65; Shp: Rs 47; Thp: Rs 58; Tri: Rs 398 & 173; Exp: Rs 175 & 752.
II race: Rs 16 w; 13, 14 p; Fc: Rs 34; Q: Rs 20; Shp: Rs 25; Thp: Rs 41; Tri: Rs 286 & 196; Exp: Rs 327 & 74.
III race: Rs 22 w; 10, 21, 19 p; Fc: Rs 318; Q: Rs 155; Shp: Rs 88; Thp: Rs 39; Tri: Rs 959 & 239; Exp: Rs 3433 & 1103.
IV race: Rs 48 w; 14, 11, 11 p; Fc: Rs 350; Q: Rs 94; Shp: Rs 24; Thp: Rs 52; Tri: Rs 257 & 105; Exp: Rs 2484 & 2485.
V race: Rs 82w; 19, 12, 18 p; Fc: Rs 615; Q: Rs 264; Shp: Rs 29; Thp: Rs 41; Tri: Rs 1077 & 404; Exp: Rs 3577 & 1839.
VI race: Rs 17 w; 10, 14, 13 p; Fc: Rs 119; Q: Rs 17; Shp: Rs 43; Thp: Rs 30; Tri: Rs 149 & 36; Exp: Rs 244 & 123.
VII race: Rs 14 w; 10, 19, 36 p; Fc: Rs 67; Q: Rs 65; Shp: Rs 42; Thp: Rs 142; Tri: Rs 779 & 718; Exp: Rs 4967 & 1064.
Jackpot: Rs 4482 & 1301. **Treble:** Rs 1574.

Knight Regent for feature

HYDERABAD SELECTION
LVR Deshmukh-trained Knight Regent, to be ridden by Akshay Kumar, is fancied to win the Ardent Knight Plate, the feature event of the races on Tuesday. The first race starts at 3 pm.

1. Zurbarn Plate - 1200M: Fox Worth 1, Zindabad 2, Analysis 3.

2. Chaitanya Chakram - Plate 1400M: NRI Range 1, Dream To Fly 2, First Lady 3.

3. Bhakranagal Plate - 1600M: Special Star 1, Onslaught 2, Real Thalaiva 3.

4. The Ardent Knight Plate - 1600M: Knight Regent 1, N R I Triple Power 2, Corte Madera 3.

5. The Prince Of Berar Plate - 1100M: Divine Tiger 1, Grit N Grace 2, My Day 3.

6. The Cabaret Plate - 1200M: Knight Crusader 1, Knotty Seniorita 2, Gloria 3.

7. The Sweet Girl Plate - 1400M: Bold Indian 1, Golden Bourbon 2, Silver Arrow 3.

Day's Best: NRI Range. **Jackpot:** 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7. **I treble:** 2, 3 & 4. **II treble:** 5, 6 & 7.

Sheetal named Para Archer of the Year

LAUSANNE, PTI: India's Sheetal Devi has been named 'Para Archer of the Year 2025' by World Archery, adding to her extraordinary achievements, which also include a historic world championship crown.

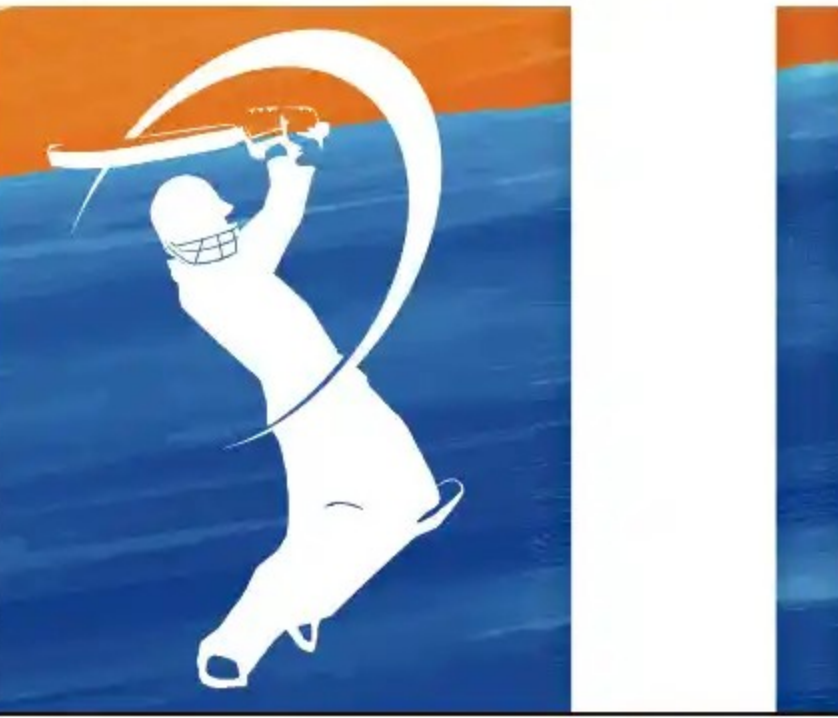
The 19-year-old from Jammu & Kashmir became the first and only female armless archer to win gold at the World Para Archery Championships by claiming the top honours in the women's compound individual event in Gwangju, South Korea last year.

Born without arms, Sheetal skillfully uses her feet, legs, and shoulder to draw the bow and shoot. She also secured a complete set of medals at the World Championships, winning the women's team silver and mixed team bronze.

"India's Sheetal Devi took the honour in the para archer of the year category after another breakthrough season that included a world title in Gwangju," said World Archery.



Sheetal Devi



10 TEAMS 13 VENUES 58 DAYS 74 MATCHES

“The level of play that we saw from Shreyas last year was probably as good as he’s ever had in an IPL and I can just see that hunger in his eyes probably burning more than ever now.

**RICKY PONTING
PBKS COACH**



Harpreet Brar

Brar rues not getting Ind A chances despite IPL exploits

NEW DELHI, PTI: Left-arm spinner Harpreet Brar can't help feeling sad when he thinks about his non-selection for India A after being a consistent performer on the high-pressure stage of IPL over the past five years. The 30-year-old has delivered for his IPL franchise Punjab Kings since joining them back in 2019. He did not get a lot of opportunities in his first two seasons but he finally earned the dressing room respect in 2021 when he dismissed the high-profile trio of Virat Kohli, Glenn Maxwell and Abde Villiers in a single game. Brar plays domestic cricket for Punjab and there too his journey has had a fair share of hurdles. After warming the bench for last five years, he finally made his Ranji Trophy debut last season and made instant impact with 23 wickets in four games. He has made a name for himself in the T20 format but he finds the red ball games "beautiful" that he is ready to do whatever it takes to reach the highest level. A natural progression in his career would be to first play India A in the format he has already proven himself in (T20). Brar at times feels sad that "others" who performed in the IPL after him got their opportunities for India A and his wait keeps getting longer. Having said that, he is far from reaching the stage of giving up. "I have to perform and be ready. Because, there can be a call anytime. So, you can only keep yourself positive. Otherwise, when a person is alone, there are many times when a moment comes that you ask yourself, when will my name come?"

Fakhar, Afridi, Raza deny ball-tampering charges

LAHORE, PTI: Pakistan's prolific batter Fakhar Zaman, pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi and Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza have denied ball-tampering charges, stemming from the Pakistan Super League match between Lahore Qalandars and Karachi Kings at the Gaddafi Stadium. Appearing before the former Sri Lankan cricketer, Zaman denied the charges against him. The charge relates to an incident just before the final over of the Karachi Kings' innings, when they needed 14 runs to win. Zaman was seen in discussion with Haris Rauf and Qalandars' captain Afridi before the over.

Royals begin with a roar

Archer, Burger, Sooryavanshi star for Rajasthan in 8-wkt win over CSK

GUWAHATI, PTI

Indian batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi smashed a 15-ball half-century after an impressive show from the bowlers, setting up an emphatic eight-wicket win for Rajasthan Royals in their IPL opener against a sluggish Chennai Super Kings here on Monday. Royals made good use of the overhead conditions to bowl out Chennai Super Kings for 127. It was a forgettable batting performance for CSK, who were put in to bat by Ravi Parag on a pitch that had been under cover for a while due to rain. The 15-year-old Sooryavanshi has made massive strides in his career since his record hundred in the IPL last season. His rare talent was on full display against a hapless CSK attack. With Sooryavanshi going ballistic from his end, his opening partner Yashasvi Jaiswal was happy to give the strike back to the fellow left-hander. Royals raced to victory in 12.1 overs. The result was a foregone conclusion after Sooryavanshi enjoyed an 18-run over. He was dropped by Kartik Sharma in that same over and duly made CSK pay heavily for that error. Some of his awe inducing strokes included a six over point off a slower ball from New Zealand pacer Matt Henry. Sooryavanshi became the third fastest to an IPL fifty with a couple of sixes off spinner Noor Ahmad. Following his fall, Jaiswal (38 not out off 36) and Ravi Parag (14 not out off 11) completed the formalities for Royals with plenty to spare. While the home team ticked all boxes, CSK looked completely out of sorts in their opener and will need to go back to the drawing board. Both CSK and the Royals, the two bottom placed teams last season, had traded their star players Ravindra Jadeja and Sanju Samson ahead of the season. It was a successful return to the Royals for Jadeja, who struck twice in his opening over. Samson, star of India's T20 World Cup triumph, could not fire on his CSK debut. In an attempt to dispatch Nandre Burger over mid-wicket, he saw his off-stump getting dislodged with a sharp delivery that seamed away. Both Nandre and Jofra Archer got the ball to talk in the powerplay. After Nandre got rid of Samson, Archer sent back CSK



Rajasthan Royals' Jofra Archer (centre) celebrates with team-mates after taking the wicket of Chennai Super Kings' captain Ruturaj Gaikwad at the Barsapara Cricket Stadium in Guwahati on Monday. AFP

skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad who backed away to go for an aerial stroke on the off-side only to see his stumps rattled. **SCOREBOARD** Chennai Super Kings: Sanju Samson b Burger 6, Ruturaj Gaikwad b Archer 6, Ayush Mahetre c Jurel b Burger 0, Matthew Short c Jaiswal b Sandeep 2, Sarfaraz Khan lbw b Jadeja 17, Kartik Sharma lbw b Brijesh 18, Shivam Dube c Bishnoi b Jadeja 6, Jamie Overton (run out) 43, Noor Ahmad c Jurel b Archer 1, Matt Henry c&b Bishnoi 5, Anshul Kamboj (not out) 7, Extras (LB-9, NB-1, W-6) 16. **TOTAL (all out in 19.4 overs) 127.** Fall of wickets: 1-14, 2-19, 3-19, 4-38, 5-51, 6-57, 7-74, 8-82, 9-94. **Bowling:** Jofra Archer 4-0-19-2, Nandre Burger 4-0-26-2, Brijesh

Sharma 3-0-17-1, Sandeep Sharma 2-4-0-22-1, Ravi Bishnoi 3-0-16-1, Ravindra Jadeja 3-0-18-2. **Rajasthan Royals:** Yashasvi Jaiswal (not out) 38, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi c Khan b Kamboj 52, Dhruv Jurel b Kamboj 18, Ravi Parag (not out) 14, Extras: (B-4, LB-1, W-1) 6. **TOTAL (for 2 wickets in 12.1 overs) 128.** Fall of wickets: 1-75, 2-99. **Bowling:** Matt Henry 3-0-40-0, Khaleel Ahmed 3-0-17-0, Anshul Kamboj 3-0-27-2, Noor Ahmad 2-0-24-0, Jamie Overton 1-0-14-0, Matthew Short 0.1-0-1-0. **Result:** RR won by 8 wickets. **PoM:** Jofra Archer.

Gill, Iyer seek a solid opening statement

Skippers have a point to prove when GT face PBKS

MULLANPUR, PTI

Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer, two India T20I batters who have often been overlooked, will captain Gujarat Titans and Punjab Kings respectively, each eager to make a statement in a high-stakes Indian Premier League opener here on Tuesday. India's Test and ODI captain Gill, who was named T20I vice-captain but later left out of the World Cup squad to accommodate Sanju Samson, has a lot to answer in the shortest format. While India went on to win a record third ICC T20 World Cup, Gill enters this season at a crucial phase in his T20 career. Since 2023, only Virat Kohli has scored more IPL runs than Gill, but the focus

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has shifted from consistency to strike rate. With a career T20 strike rate of around 138, Gill showed signs of improvement last season, scoring at over 155 -- something he would look to build on this season. With Matthew Hayden now part of the coaching staff as batting coach, Gill's six-hitting and intent at the top will be closely watched. Since Hardik Pandya's exit after IPL 2023, Gill has grown into his leadership role, and the team now clearly revolves around him. Having won the title in their debut season in 2022, Gujarat Titans have remained one of the most consistent sides, finishing third last year before losing to Mumbai Indians in the Eliminator. They look one of the most settled units again, retaining 20 players. The opening pair of Gill and Sai Sudharsan -- last season's top scorer with 759 runs -- remains their biggest strength.



GT's Shubman Gill (left) and PBKS' Shreyas Iyer will be looking to lead their respective teams from the front when the two sides lock horns on Tuesday. AFP

KKR aware of Green's bowling unavailability: CA

SYDNEY, PTI

Cricket Australia on Monday said the Kolkata Knight Riders' management is "fully aware" of Cameron Green's injury status after the team's captain Ajinkya Rahane created a flutter by stating that only the all-rounder's home board knew why he could not bowl in their IPL opener against Mumbai Indians. Rahane deflected queries on Green's absence as a bowler in Mumbai on Sunday night by saying, "Ask Cricket Australia," triggering a mild controversy on the player's current fitness status. "Cameron has a lower back injury which is being managed but requires him to abstain from bowling for a short period," a CA spokesperson told PTI. "Cameron is currently rebuilding his bowling loads in India with a view to return in around 10-12 days' time. KKR has been communicated with and is fully aware of this information." Green did not bowl competitively for nearly 12 months -- from September 2024 to October 2025 -- after undergoing surgery for a stress fracture in his back and even after that period, his contributions with the ball have been minimal. Green's last competitive



KKR's Cameron Green is still recovering from a lower back injury and the Australian all-rounder will not be able to bowl until he recovers completely. AFP

outing with the ball came in the T20 World Cup against Oman on February 20 earlier this year at Pallekele, where he bowled just two overs. Overall, Green just bowled 19 deliveries during the showpiece and took one wicket (against Zimbabwe). KKR had gone all out at the IPL mini auction to secure the Australian for a whopping Rs 25.20 crore, making him the costliest overseas buy. The franchise is already without key pacers -- Matheesha Pathirana, Harshit Rana, Akash Deep and Mustafizur Rahman. While Mustafizur was removed from the KKR roster

on BCCI's directive amid political tensions with Bangladesh, Harshit and Akash Deep were ruled out due to injuries. "Slinger" Pathirana, another high-profile acquisition, is also recovering from a niggle and yet to join the squad. With Green also not being utilised with the bowl in their IPL opener against Mumbai Indians, KKR faced a severe pace-bowling crisis in their lung-opener despite defending a tall 220. They were forced to rely on Vaibhav Arora and debutant Blessing Muzarabani, who replaced Mustafizur, to share new-ball duties while an uncapped Kartik Tyagi was used as an Impact Sub.

Not here to show how talented I am: Rahane

MUMBAI, PTI: Dismissive of the never-ending speculation around his future, experienced India batter and Kolkata Knight Riders captain Ajinkya Rahane says he is playing cricket for personal growth and not to prove a point to the naysayers. The 37-year-old Rahane had stepped down from Mumbai's Ranji Trophy captaincy last season and he also did not lead the side in white-ball domestic competitions. The move triggered another round of chatter around the future of the batter, who hasn't played for India since 2023. "Let people talk about me. They have been talking about me since like what, 20 years now. Let them talk," Rahane told reporters when asked if his 40-ball 67 with five sixes and three fours against Mumbai Indians here on Sunday was in any way a statement especially for those in Mumbai's cricket circuit. "I am really happy with the way I am batting at the moment. I am not here to show anyone how talented I am and what's my game. People are watching. Let them watch. Let them talk," he said.

Rohit 2.0 is ready to dominate: Kumble

MUMBAI, PTI: Former India captain Anil Kumble is quite impressed with how Rohit Sharma (in pic) has started the new IPL season for Mumbai Indians and he expects the opener's "2.0 avatar" to worry rivals throughout the ongoing edition. The 38-year-old Rohit smacked a 38-ball 78 in MI's six-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders in their IPL opener here on Sunday. "Rohit Sharma seems to have arrived in his 2.0 avatar, and his innings showed he is ready to dominate again. The way he hit the ball all around the ground reminded me of his prime," Kumble said on 'Star Sports'. "It is not easy to hit sixes against bowlers like Varun Chakravathy, Sunil Narine and Blessing Muzarabani, but he made it look easy. He has worked a lot on his fitness, and when you come back after a short break, it takes five to seven days to get your timing back and find your rhythm. "This was a fantastic innings...the six-hitting looked easy, and even though the boundaries were small, those

shots were going into the stands. This knock shows that Rohit means business and this version of him will worry all IPL teams," he added. KKR, missing some key bowlers due to injury, heavily relied on spinners Narine and Chakravathy to come good but neither of them clicked on Sunday. "KKR are relying too much on Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravathy, and Narine did not even complete his quota of four overs, which was surprising. The disappointing part was that Ajinkya Rahane did not bring him on in the Powerplay when Rohit and Ricketon were attacking," he pointed out. "By the time Narine came on, the damage was already done. Narine and Varun were the bowlers who could have challenged MI, but they did not bowl enough together. That is where KKR missed their chances to get back into the game. "They need to use their resources better. Their fast-bowling unit looks inexperienced, but when you have two world class spinners, you need to use them well."



Mahela plays down SKY talks as Impact Sub

MUMBAI, PTI: India's T20 skipper Suryakumar Yadav playing as an impact substitute in the Mumbai Indians' IPL opener here was a precautionary measure due to a niggle he is nursing, said head coach Mahela Jayawardene, insisting that there are no "unwanted stories" to be found in this. Suryakumar did not field for MI in their first match of the season against Kolkata Knight Riders and scored an 8-ball 16 during a brief stay in the middle as the hosts hammered KKR by six wickets to record their highest successful run chase in IPL history here on Sunday. "I hope we don't create unwanted stories (here), the camp is happy. He had an extra couple of days (off that) he wanted," Jayawardene told reporters after he was asked why like former India and MI skipper Rohit Sharma last season, Suryakumar was played as an impact substitute. "He had a little tight groin and he was doing fielding and all that. But I knew I had another five days from this game to the other. I just wanted to give him that extra bit of time. He was even keen at the end to go (and field) for three-four overs. But I said, no, (it's) just fine."

Ryan's debut in focus as India play HK

KOCHI, PTI

All eyes will be on Australian-born winger Ryan Williams as India face Hong Kong in the final match of what has been a failed campaign in the AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers, here on Tuesday. While the campaign has been one to forget for the Blue Tigers, the much-anticipated debut of the new No. 11 marks a significant new chapter for the national team. While the payment issue had been resolved after the All India Football Federation (AIFF) intervened, it remains



Ryan Williams

to be seen how the home team performs in its last match of the qualifying tournament. Out of contention for the 2027 tournament, both India and Hong Kong will also look to gain FIFA ranking points and build for their future assignments

when the two sides lock horns at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. The match will also mark the return of international football to the city after a decade, a much-needed event for a state that is considered one of the biggest hubs of Indian football with the locals always eager to turn up in large numbers for football matches at any level. With a strong performance on the field against Hong Kong, the Indian team will hope to end the campaign on a positive note, barely days after its head coach Khalid Jamil and some of the players were denied entry at the venue due to non-payment of a mandatory security deposit to the stadium owners by the Kerala Football Association. Set to finish at the bottom of the table, India will have their task cut out as they look to avoid the ignominy of ending this campaign without a win. Williams, the 32-year-old winger, born in Perth, could feature in the game. In a historic move for Indian football, Williams renounced his Australian citizenship in late 2025 to represent the Blue Tigers. He qualified through his Anglo-Indian mother, whose father was a renowned footballer for Bombay in the 1950s.

Women's hockey camp from April 1

NEW DELHI, PTI: A tried-and-tested group of 31 probable assemble for the senior women's national hockey camp from April 1 to prepare for the World Cup later this year. The camp will be conducted at the Sports Authority of India's National Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru. The team is currently basking in the glory of a strong performance at the recently concluded FIH World Cup Qualifiers in Hyderabad, where it secured a silver.

State's Rohan, Manisha add two gold

RAIPUR, PTI

Karnataka extended their lead at the top of the table with two gold medals from the wrestling mat in Ambikapur at the Khelo India Tribal Games here on Monday. Wrestler Rohan Doddamani bagged the state's first gold medal outside the swimming pool when he defeated Rajasthan's Dinesh Solanki by technical superiority in the 60kg greco-roman final. Manisha then wrapped up the day for the table toppers with a hard fought 12-8 win by points over Himachal Pradesh's Muskan.



Manisha Juwava Siddi (left) and Rohan Doddamani.

Karnataka now has 17 gold, six silver and five bronze medals. Odisha continued to be second place with nine gold, four silvers and 10 bronze medals. Meanwhile, Mulayam Kharwar bagged Bihar's first

gold medal of the day with a dominant win over Rakesh Meena of Rajasthan in the men's 65kg freestyle final with KV Kempannavar of Karnataka taking home the bronze medal. At the international hockey stadium in Raipur, favourites Odisha set up a final clash against Mizoram. In the semifinals, Odisha hammered Madhya Pradesh 8-0 while Mizoram got the better of Jharkhand 3-2. In athletics, Arunachal Pradesh's middle-distance runner Nedi Ngi clinched the women's 5000m gold.